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PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS

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TO
M.B.D.

PREFACE

The title of this book is a fair description of its contents. It is assumed that every science will have not only a body of materials and appropriate laws for explaining them, but also specific methods for solving the pertinent problems confronting the investigator. To these three phases ethics adds a fourth, namely, the sanctions that stand behind the execution of moral acts, either as inducements or obstructions in their path. These four factors comprise the program of moral science, and in accordance with their terms I have attempted to expound the meaning of the type of behavior which is uniformly spoken of as moral. I have not hesitated to argue that conduct is worthy of the same kind of objective treatment which we insist on devoting to a laboratory experiment. Hence, desires, choices, emotions, are capable of select and extended examination, although the methods pursued must be different from those of physiology and the results perhaps not so exact. Some of the instruments to be employed I have described in the first chapter and their formal use will, I trust, be evident in the succeeding discussions. It should appear from the text that morals is a system of behavior having its roots in that sentiment of obligation which the normal intelligence invariably exhibits.

It would be futile for me to relate my argument to any historic form of ethical theory. I am not altogether persuaded that a systematic theory is either possible or, if possible, desirable. We may preferably follow the lead of Sidgwick and call the argument a *method* of ethics, meaning thereby that moral endeavor does not so much require an elaborate explanation of its terms as a frank statement of its objective conditions and the way to meet them. Accord-

ingly, I have held the inquiry rigidly to the implications of the individual act as the one observable datum in experience. I have assumed that every moral act is an event taking place in a four-dimensional world, but possessing a property that physics and biology cannot satisfactorily deal with. Mind is not the same as body, and mind must have its part in moral behavior, or the word loses its intrinsic significance. The ground-tone of the argument, then, is that conduct is something more than neural reaction. Moral consciousness coördinates responses, chooses between them, and applies a certain type of judgment in obtaining a corresponding form of action.

It is always interesting for one who has spent many years in teaching a subject to put its essential concepts on paper and see how they "look." How will they appear to other persons who are engaged in the same pursuit? How will they appear to minds that seek an explanation of the difficult problems facing the bewildered public of today? No one, I am sure, will deny that college students in particular should be invited to obtain at least an elementary acquaintance with the fundamental principles of moral science, together with the rules of application. It is the author's hope that the perusal of these pages may stimulate in the reader's mind an appreciation of the reality of the facts and a desire to aid in their adequate explanation.

A selected list of references is appended to each chapter. The lists aim to be representative, not exhaustive. No attempt has been made to classify them according to schools. They are set down for the information of the reader in the hope that he may be inclined to extend his studies beyond the range of the accompanying text. Obviously, they do not embody a complete survey of the authorities consulted in the development of the problems of the book. It will be noted that periodical references have been avoided, on the ground that many libraries are without facilities in this field.

I take this opportunity of acknowledging the considerate courtesies of my colleagues and friends during the

busy days of preparing the manuscript for this work. I am especially indebted to my son, Barrows Dunham, for the diligence and care with which he has assembled the materials for the index and to Miss Jane D. Shenton for her patient labors in reading the proof of the entire volume.

J. H. D.

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PART I
THE MATERIALS OF ETHICS

CHAPTER I

ETHICS AND THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

Two words have taken root in the English language as symbols of the specific type of behavior called conduct. The first of these is the word *moral*, which is derived from the Latin and there signifies custom, habit, collective modes of action. It reflects the element of individual caprice which slowly hardens into formal practice. In every instance the word refers to external actions which can be observed by the eye or the ear and subsequently imitated. It furnishes, therefore, concrete materials for the scientific student to appraise.

The second word, *ethical*, is older in origin, but carries substantially the same meaning. It corresponds to two different terms in the Greek, distinguished from one another only by the quantity of the first vowel; the one ordinarily embracing objective usages of the group, the other, the inner disposition or character of the individual.¹ In some passages the latter term comprehends both meanings; thus, Hesiod² applies it to the common sacrifices offered to the gods, and Plato³ to the sum of attributes embodied in the life of the just and noble man. The point of interest for us is that the word has been admitted into our speech largely to provide a term indicating man's reflection on his own behavior. It is fair to use it, then, whenever we speak of the problems and theories of moral conduct.

But before we can study the principles governing the form of behavior which we designate *moral*, we must ask

¹ "Moral" from L. *mos*; "ethical" from Gr. ἠθικός and ἡθικός.

² "Works and Days," line 137.

³ "Republic," VI, 490 C; II, 375 C. The references to Plato in this book are always to the Stallbaum text.

whether there is a special method for examining the materials within this domain. Ethics, it has been historically maintained, is a segment of philosophy and should follow its accepted rules. The argument begins with a universal premise and proceeds to a necessary conclusion. Applied to the problems of moral experience, this means that we assume a standard judgment as the basis of action—for example, the Cyrenaic axiom of pleasure or the Stoic theory of Nature—and pursue its implications to their logical end. The deductive method has scored many notable triumphs in the past, none more effective than those of Immanuel Kant. But in his case, as in many others, its value has lain in the mass of concrete examples adduced to show the cogency of the maxim; and this is in itself a distinct admission that a judgment to be valid must first be tested by the acid reality of fact.

This being true, the study of moral phenomena enters the field of scientific inquiry. The desires and decisions of the moral agent may now be analyzed precisely as we analyze the organic specimen in the biological laboratory, making due allowance for any new elements in the problem. In taking this stand, ethics is not cutting away its ancient moorings; it is only adopting the course which philosophy in general is now following, that, namely, which seeks verification for its concepts in man's experience with the external world. The science of conduct, then, will comply with the terms of a practical logic which breaks up into a number of independent methods.

1. The Method of Classification.

The first method to be studied is known as the method of classification. The essence of all knowledge lies in the detection of identities. If two events can be compared so as to cancel out the common factor, the beginning of knowledge has been made. Science has capitalized this tendency and instructed her workers to arrange all data in the given subject under recognized heads. Thus, plants may be classified

according to the shape of the leaf, the nature of the fruit, the foliation of the stalk, or the structure of the seed. The diagnostic property, as logicians say, embodies the characteristic feature which binds a series of observed objects into a single whole.

This method is used by ethics to mark out the line of separation between acts acknowledged to be moral and those that do not attain that level. Hence, we must first eliminate all inappropriate cases, as biologists do, when they exclude from the Echinoderm group certain rudimentary organisms which fail to show the peculiar reactions of the class. Nature or science has fixed these types, and only revolutionary changes in the physical world or a new view of scientific materials may disrupt the class or compel a rearrangement of its forms. In the same way, ethics is bound to set the strictly moral modes of action by themselves. It declines to approve the impulse of primitive society which holds a falling tree "responsible" for the death of a man passing momentarily within its reach.⁴ It ascribes no moral value to the depredations of the brute, and counsels that neither anger nor hurt shall be visited upon it, merely with a view to the execution of justice. In short, all extra-human behavior is without moral quality.

Furthermore, the very forms which science by this method excludes from established groups of organisms represent the effort of Nature to extend her power beyond the familiar limits. Thus, newly discovered specimens turn out to be either intermediate stages in the formation of an additional species or distinct mutations within a species already known. It is quite possible to classify many of the facts of moral life with an approximate degree of certainty. But some incidents disturb the mind of the observer. The in-between state of the adolescent period puzzles the teacher, worries the parent, and gives grave annoyance to the neighbors. When the youth stands on the threshold of maturity, conflicting emotions often rage within him. He

⁴ Plato, "Laws," IX, 873.

challenges the authority of his elders; he criticizes the laws of his group; he even questions the basic principles of the government under which he lives. Shall we treat his movements as the expressions of animal desire or rank them as incipient moral decision? The two classes of acts we have mentioned have no place for the mixed behavior of adolescence. The problem is solved by the principle of change. In his passage from the non-moral to the moral state, a multitude of intermediate actions will be performed. Maturity is not reached at a single bound, but by a series of tentative adjustments of body and mind. Indeed, the experience of the individual man is paralleled in the development of the race, the barbaric dance and cruel warfare of the primitive giving way slowly to the refined deportment of the civilized society. The flexible method of logic enables us to understand the entire series of acts.

2. The Method of Causal Analysis.

The second method deals with the search for a cause. To many thinkers, cause is nothing but a name for repeated experiences. We observe that a ball released from the hand falls directly to the floor. Every recurrence of the same event brings the same result as viewed by the observer. Causality, therefore, is a process of thought, not a required sequence in Nature. On the other hand, the tendency of scientific theory is to regard events as causally related. Thus, when Pasteur undertook to destroy the hypothesis of spontaneous generation, he set up the counterclaim that micro-organisms called bacteria entered the vessel of sterilized water from the surrounding air. He proved this by placing an asbestos filter upon the mouth of the flask and intercepting the in-going germs. The claim became a provisional formula with definite scientific value. Lord Lister, the British surgeon, adopted the principle and applied it to the uses of surgery. He argued that, if bacteria could be sterilized in water, they could also be sterilized in the open wound by means of an antiseptic. Assuming that the

dangers of a surgical operation were due in large measure to the activity of these organisms, he applied the hypothesis and found reason to regard it as valid. In both Lister's and Pasteur's experiments, the method of analysis determined the causal relations of external substances and events. The method, then, carries with it a certain predictive value. It affirms that, if approximate conditions are given, we may have no hesitation in putting the terms of the formula into effect. It admits that, especially in the realm of organic life, the expected conditions can never be the same as those already observed. Still, any valuable scientific rule is elastic enough to fit itself into the new situation.

With these reservations, we should have no difficulty in using the method for the solution of moral problems. Let us select the fact of retribution for a momentary survey. Retribution is possible as a concept in ethics only if we allow that human beings are responsible for their private and public acts. If conduct is bound to the wheel of physical law, the word can have no appreciable meaning. Granting for the sake of argument that Nero's murder of his mother affected unfavorably both his future career and his reputation in succeeding ages, we may inquire wherein lay the specific demerit of the deed. It has been alleged that the jealousy of Agrippina at the growing influence of Seneca, her duplicity in bringing about the death of her husband, the extreme youth of the matricide, and his inability to withstand the machinations of his political supporters might well serve to mitigate the gravity of the offense. At any rate, they have been proposed as valid hypotheses to account for his act. On the other hand, later and more aggravated crimes confirmed the hardening of his moral sensibilities, showing how irresistibly the causal process of retribution works to its ends. The retributory principle is, at root, a structural law of character. By means of it the trained analyst may forecast the consequences of any similar offense. Hence the method we are studying is an important aid in obtaining concrete logical results.

3. The Method of Derivation.

The third method of science is genetic. It indicates how a given situation has been derived from an earlier group of materials. The spirit of the method is distinctly modern. The tendency of the Greek mind was to judge every event from its immediate surroundings without regard to its historic background. Now the inquirer seeks information in two directions: first, the steps or stages through which the process passes and, secondly, the reasons why one stage has actually developed into its successor. The possibilities of the method are enormous. If we examine the structure of the physical universe, we may either seek for the origins of the world in a vortex of unformed bodies, or, as is much more scientific because subject to experimental test, we may begin with a minimal constituent such as an atom or electron and work our way out to the cosmic order. If we study the stratified contour of the earth's crust, we may ask through what primeval convulsions the planet has gone in order to reach its present conditions. Again, the method is used with impressive effect in unravelling the intricate problems of the genesis of life, particularly the final and most forbidding problem, the origin of human intelligence, with its function of conceptual judgment and its power to distinguish Me from Thee, Thine from Mine.

It is due to the insight of Comte and Spencer that the new instrument of logic was brought to bear on the issues of modern culture. Language, for instance, is a capital factor in the development of the race. Its origins are lost in the gray mists of antiquity, but its present richness, especially in the Indo-European stem, reflects the struggles of body and mind through which it has passed in its effort to express the fundamental needs of man. The rudimentary symbols of art uncovered in the caves of southern France exhibit an amazing contrast with the splendor of Greek sculpture or the multiform fancies of Renaissance painting. The attempts to explain the meaning of the world, beginning with the naïve cosmogonies of India and the Euphrates

valley and ending with the mature philosophies of Europe, sustain a defined genetic relation. In every case the progress of thought represents a determinable change in the capacities of mind to grapple with new situations.

We may, therefore, ask whether the early types of social reaction foreshadow the systematic concepts of right and wrong which the moral consciousness now follows. The derivative method here lends its help. Its two principles become imperatives: Study the change of forms and the reasons for the change. A multitude of examples are at hand. Examine this one. The relations of men in the group invariably provide for some kind of sanction, some mode of compensation for an untoward act. The most primitive type is personal requital, such as when the head of a family takes revenge for the murder of one of its members: "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." The concept of social punishment appears on the next level. Here the offense is construed as one against the official code of the tribe, or, as among the Hebrews, against the decrees of divine authority. A third stage is reached when the safety of the group is made the basis of coercion. The right to take life now reposes in the hands of the constituted officers of the law; there it remains today. We may envisage a further advance, where scientific method will determine the treatment of the misdemeanant. Physical weakness, mental immaturity, the cross-purposes of social conventions, will then be weighed in the balance before judgment is made. But even enlightened communities are not yet ready to take this step. At any rate, the whole program of public sanctions must be studied in the light of the historic past, and the one instrument of logic which can give direct guidance is the method of derivation.

4. The Teleological Method.

It is a commonplace in learned circles that the foregoing modes of inquiry do not explain all the facts before us. One sector is entirely omitted, that which embraces the concept

of purpose. Can science deal with so elusive a notion? The query should rather read: Can science proceed without it? Purpose, in this sense, is different from the ancient doctrine of design. Design refers to an external Power which imposes its intents upon a passive world. Purpose, on the other hand, is an active principle of nature applied in particular to the behavior of organic bodies. It is an appropriate term for describing, say, the function of a plant. The structure of its cells and tissues may be determined by the formulas of chemistry, but the operation of the organism as an independent body demands a comprehensive purpose—*what it can do*, the realization of an *end*, whatever it be. Obedient to the same principle, the paramecium picks up suitable substance from its environment for the purpose of maintaining its existence. End and means are inseparably linked, else the organism perishes. To say that the ordinary reactions of the chemical units will account for the union is to betray a willful disregard of fact. Purpose is just as much a part of the world as is gravitational force. Hence, if other methods cannot expound its significance, we must devise one that will satisfy all its terms.

That human behavior may be examined by such a method no serious thinker has ever denied. To be sure, here and there a rigorous analyst has sought to reduce all moral action to the sequences of mechanical law. The “Ethics of Hercules” is a brave attempt to envelop the threads of sensibility in the warp and woof of a hard deterministic formula. Socrates walks because his bones are thoroughly articulated.⁵ Sir Isaac Newton thinks because his cerebral cortices obey the prescriptions of mechanical force. But cause, if merely physical, cannot account for the essential facts of moral consciousness. We must seek some way of supplementing the rule of matter by the principle of purposive action. Common sense has already adopted it in an uncritical form. Men who adhere to the unvarnished theory of mechanism would no doubt consider themselves insulted

⁵ Plato, “Phædo,” 98 C.

if they were charged with formulating an argument which looked to no conceived end. Hence, purpose for man adds to the purposes of the lower species one discriminating quality—it is reflectively conscious of its own existence. The end becomes an *end-in-view*. In no line of human endeavor is the designed end so emphatically marked as in the conception of a good act. The whole study we are about to make is pivoted on the essential principle of this method. By means of it we shall be able to penetrate more deeply into the secrets of conduct than we could by the use of any other method.

5. Is Ethics Also an Art?

We assume, then, that ethics proceeds in its study of moral phenomena by the aid of scientific methods. To that extent it has the right to take the name of science, precisely as logic or æsthetics or any of the objective sciences. The main purpose in all of them is the ascertainment of elementary principles by which the accumulated facts of experience may be understood. We might, and often do, raise the hypothetical question whether man could comprehend the law of contradiction in logic if he had never found himself in conflicting conditions, or whether he would be inclined to examine his æsthetic feelings if he had never been subjected to the appeal of beauty. But the plain fact is this, that principles are valueless without appropriate content. Logic cannot be merely a bundle of symbols; it is a set of laws applicable to the conduct of human thought. Æsthetics is not only the formulation of an ideal type of beauty; it is a group of principles which enable us to determine why a picture or a landscape possesses enduring charm. Ethics is a *science* in the sense that it studies an objective body of knowledge, capable of observation and description: the habits and appetitions of conscious behavior, the interactions of the communal life, the reflective analyses made by different races and ages respecting ideals of character, the sanctions to duties, and the various forms of institutional life. Ethics is a *normative* science in the sense that it pro-

vides the basic axioms for the particular set of reactions in the field of economics, government, social organization, and private decisions, just as logic does for the descriptive sciences.

If ethics is a science in the meaning just defined, may it also be classed as an art, supposing that the two terms do not destroy one another? We must answer the question with an emphatic negative if by *art* we refer to a certain facility of action induced either by native knack or repeated practice. Thus, a man with quick eye and poise of mind may easily learn how to drive a motor-car, though his knowledge of the laws of physics or the mechanics of the engine be extremely small. But there is another and more impressive definition. Art is the mode of behavior dictated by a thorough familiarity with the issues at stake, the reasons for settling them, and the best methods by which the settlement can be effected. Rhetoric as an art, says Aristotle, is the "faculty of discerning in every case the available means of persuasion."⁶ "By a rule of art," writes Austin in his study of jurisprudence, "we mean a prescription or pattern which is offered to practitioners of an art, and which they are advised to observe when preparing some process" (for example, in the law courts).⁷ In both instances there is a note of hesitation, a suspicion that the result will not correspond with the expectations. The means of "persuasion" which the rhetorician follows are the only means *available*, no assurance being given that they will be effective. Austin states his conviction with British frankness: "There is not the semblance of a sanction, nor is there the shadow of a duty." The law of jurisprudence as a science obliges men to act; its precepts as an art may or may not guide accurately the course of the practitioner. The first difference between science and art lies in the uncertainty of success. Logic inevitably brings the mind to its conclusions; ethics can formulate compelling principles of thought. But the rigorous logician or moralist stops at that point. Neither

⁶ "Rhetoric," trans. by Jebb, p. 1.

⁷ "Lectures on Jurisprudence," I, p. 208.

logic nor ethics can translate formulas into unerring practice, either in digesting new scientific material or controlling new and difficult moral situations.

The difficulty is further accentuated when we study the application of the rules of art. A high-minded man might readily organize a series of precepts which he proposed to use as instruments of decision in moments of need. Can he make the conduct fit the terms of his precepts? Aristotle's definition of art introduces a serious objection. The artist, he says, effects a change in objects or persons other than himself. The physician attempts to heal the body of his patient, and if he practices upon himself he does it in a strictly impersonal and objective manner. The sculptor chisels the marble into likenesses that he himself has conceived. The manual worker fabricates an object of utilitarian worth, a chair, a cabinet, a building, a bridge, in accordance with the accepted rules of his craft. In short, the artificer imposes his idea and will upon another medium, be it matter, life, or personality. Can ethics follow the same rule? It is clear enough in its initial maxims; it tells us what *kind* of action men ought to perform; it enables us to compare the action as performed with the contents of the original formula. Can it provide the incentive to realize the proposed program? Can it correct mistakes and retrieve past failures? Is ethics an art as well as a scientific method? Let Mr. H. W. B. Joseph answer for the rigorist:

The peculiar character of Logic, Ethics, and Æsthetics seems to be this, that we who, in them, reflect upon thought, conduct, or art, ourselves also in other moments of our activity create these objects of our reflection; and because in our reflection we recognize the failure of many of our attempts to think soundly, act rightly, or work beautifully, it is supposed to be the business of reflection, logical, ethical, or æsthetical, to rectify these failures. Such a supposition is in the main erroneous. It is by becoming better men of science that we correct our scientific blunders, by becoming better men that we correct our moral judgments and choices, by becoming better artists that we correct our æsthetical.⁸

⁸“An Introduction to Logic,” 2nd ed., p. 11, Note.

The upshot of the argument is that no normative science is in a position to dictate terms to its users, since it is obliged to employ the same and not a different medium.

The two objections are, in reverse order, first, that moral conduct and abstract principles represent two alien processes of thought, and, secondly, that the attainment of good character has none of the certainty that belongs to the formulation of a consistent theory. The first of these objections may be stated in another way. Critical observers are wont to divide the activity of the mind into two parts, particular reactions to stimuli and universal ideas that give meaning and tone to the specific act. Professor Mackenzie argues that no moral action can be completely explained by the general principles that represent the customary virtues;⁹ it possesses a property peculiar to its own situation and may even require a new concept to register its full significance. This is especially true of a new definition of an established virtue like courage, when silent endurance is added to the scope of its application. Hence, it would be wise, he thinks, to decline to make ethics an art and hold it to be strictly the study of principles. In answer to this objection, we may say that the materials employed in organizing a system of moral maxims are in no wise different from those appearing in a significant moral situation. The program of ethics includes both the concrete data and the governing laws. Thus, when a child is taught obedience in the family or a youth learns loyalty to his group through the strenuous exercises of initiation, behavior is necessarily embodied in a definite formula with universal application and therefore with abstract intent. It is true that no set of general concepts can cover every detail of a given action; nor can any rule make provision for the exceptions that are bound to occur by virtue of differences in temperament and environment. Nevertheless, all symbols of moral authority, all ideas that involve the sense of obligation, have their roots in the basic impulses of consciousness and their nur-

⁹ "Manual of Ethics," 4th ed., p. 13.

ture in the soil of experience. Men must learn to handle both theory and fact, and the study of ethics furnishes the needed apparatus.

The second objection considers the question of success. It is assumed that a normative science will enable the reflective thinker to reach an imperative conclusion. No known art, however elaborate its prescriptions, confers the same prerogatives upon its practitioners. For this reason ethics cannot undertake a practical operation, such as forming good character, when it is sure to meet obstruction and probable defeat. All the logic and mathematics of ancient Greece were unequal to the task of explaining the irregular motions of the planets in their supposed transit about the earth. Modern scientific thought has the same difficulties in ascertaining the nature of gravitational force; is it magnetic or does it possess properties independent of magnetism? If logic with its exact processes fails to solve the problems of physics, should we be surprised if ethical inquiry is unable to break the stubbornness of moral phenomena? Perhaps the trouble lies not in the inadequacy of the instrument but in the wrong results we expect to obtain. Logic has two constitutive elements, formal principles and inductive method. Scientific method is in itself a kind of *art* in that we may not look for a precise and altogether predictable end to its application. It has much of the tentative procedure of the artist who tries now this color, now that, before his sense of harmony is satisfied. Hence, both science and art adopt a sort of dialectic which unites two somewhat different groups of data into a new synthesis. In fact, the Greek word τέχνη, art, indicates that it is a preparation for an appropriate result, although we can never be confident that the result will be reached or, if reached, that it will satisfy the terms of the problem. Art requires a distinct and indispensable apparatus, as does science—in painting, the canons of perspective, color relations, suitable subject. Such *technique* when skillfully employed makes at least an attempt to realize the ideals in the mind of artist or scientist. It reminds us of an analogy in organic nature which

may be said to follow a certain "technique" in developing new forms of living beings. There is nothing in the structure or function of existing organisms to guarantee the type of body that shall *emerge*; but we can detect the measures adopted to produce some *lawful* evolution.

Applying this principle to moral behavior, we may urge that the agent pursues a similar technique expressed in settled habits, organized institutions, and a system of valid principles. They may not insure in detail the desired effect, but they inaugurate a dialectic which progressively reveals new modes of action, each an improvement on the preceding, just as we discover a greater mastery over inert matter at each step in the development of living forms. The change is always *for the better*, though its precise gains may be obscured. Hence, while ethics in its formal theory is concerned chiefly with the elucidation of principles, it may not refuse to examine the nature of the technique which is to make those principles real in the moral experience of mankind. In a critical period of history, such as the aftermath of the World War, when scientific technique grows exceedingly complicated, men are inclined to assume that moral axioms are suspended as international law was, for the most part, during the progress of the conflict; and this assumption must be met with a new statement of the basic concepts of conduct. But law without a system of sanctions is a dead letter. We therefore propose to show that ethics implies both formal principles and objective methods of enforcing them.

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CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF THE MORAL ACT

1. The Moral Act as Distinguished from the Non-moral.

The primary use to which the logical methods must be put is to discover the nature and form of the moral act. We have already intimated that conduct which bears the imprint of value, obligation, moral purpose, is to be sharply distinguished from behavior which is described solely from the standpoint of the organic processes. Thus, we cannot deny that human acts springing from an unmatured intelligence like that of savage or child cannot be judged by the same standards as those employed in studying the normal adult mind. The flash of anger in the child or the savage's hand lifted to strike has none of the inherent properties which we ascribe to the retirement from battle of the Hellenic Achilles. Likewise, the matured intelligence must be in its usual state of activity; if not, we hesitate on good grounds and after plentiful experience to hold the agent to any reasonable terms of accountability. The somnambulist risking his life at the open window, the patient under a deep anæsthetic, the controlled subject in an hypnotic trance, even the man who has sunk into the stupor of intoxication, seem, to instructed opinion, to be outside the pale of moral initiative. Their actions are to be explained by the reflections of psychology, not by the maxims of ethics.

Still further, if matured intelligence in a normal state of activity is carefully inspected, it will be found that there are many conscious modes of expression which scarcely reach the level of moral significance. All automatic reactions of the body—breathing, beating of the heart, digestion, the development of the sex function—are beyond the

command of the subject. They are parts of the organic constitution which possess no intrinsic moral quality. The same may be said of the group of reactions classified as reflexes, that is, performed either without voluntary direction or even attentive response, such as the winking of the eye or the lifting of the hand against a menacing intruder. No doubt they were originally the products of experience and hence could not have been acquired except through the learning process. The point here is that the agent has not deliberately contrived them in his mind and then set them in motion. They represent the unanalyzed needs of the human structure.

There is one additional group of acts which may or may not possess moral value. From the point of view of character as a whole, they are certainly endowed with such properties; studied with respect to their momentary purposes, they appear as spontaneous expressions of intelligent behavior, nothing more. Spencer suggests a pertinent illustration. "Shall I walk to the waterfall today? or shall I ramble along the seashore? Here the ends are ethically indifferent. If I go to the waterfall, shall I go over the moor or take the path through the wood? Here the means are ethically indifferent."¹ The end proposed is of strictly æsthetic interest. Suppose, however, that the desires and expectations of another person are involved in the transaction; then my choice assumes at once a moral complexion. The æsthetic impulse is no longer alone; it is united with what many thinkers have considered a profounder influence, namely, obligation; it is formed to meet a question more fundamental than whether the proposed excursion should be made at all, and, if it is, under what conditions. In our analysis of behavior it is essential that the distinction between the two attitudes should be carefully drawn. The quick, unsophisticated response to beauty is Nature's mode of bringing her subjects into direct relations with her infallible charms. Hence, the treatment by an artist of

¹ "Principles of Ethics," Vol. I, p. 5.

his chosen theme is in itself not primarily a matter of moral determination; it is the exercise of a primitive and creative gift. At the same time, the artist dare not forget that he is a member of the larger community which in all probability will exhibit an interest in his work. He cannot afford to spurn their opinion or reject their criticism, and so must learn to understand the moral values which time and good judgment have set up.

We may sum up our preliminary survey by naming the following characteristics as belonging by right to moral conduct: a developed intelligence, a mind aware of its specific acts, a voluntary assertion of intent, and, finally, a purpose that passes beyond intellectual or æsthetic aims to the recognition and application of the ideas of right and wrong.

2. A Moral Act Is Concrete and Individually Presented.

It is not the object of ethics to remove moral deportment from the sphere of common conscious action. The judgment of Spinoza is doubtless correct; all thinking, even severely logical reflection, has but a single justified end, to wit, shaping and influencing the corporate character of the man. If this is true, moral acts can be defined at the very beginning as constitutional functions of mind. Accordingly, the materials of ethical study must first pass through the crucible of psychological analysis before its appropriate concepts—to wit, motive, intent, obligation, and duty—can be attached. The original query is this: What is the nature of the moral act as a definite unit in everyday experience? We have here a problem in mental science, and we shall discuss it as such. The elementary principle of mind is its ability to discriminate one thing from another in its immediate environment. The object before the eye is a single whole, related, to be sure, to its neighbors, but for the moment the sole claim upon our attention. It may be and often is broken up into its constituent parts, as if we had placed the object under a magnifying glass for closer examination. Still, as

an image in the mind, it maintains a distinct and indissoluble unity.

We may then inquire further: In what respect is the reception of the image by the mind a single fact of experience? Various theories have been proposed. We may answer that the presentation of a sense-image is but one factor in the mental transaction. Three factors are involved in every independent act: the impulse or desire for contact with the outside world; the framing of the individual percept; and the feelings, conscious or unconscious, pleasant or unpleasant, which follow upon the satisfaction of the desire. The last factor comes to the attention of the mind through a second conscious act, but is nevertheless an essential part of the single mental situation.

Does moral conduct offer the same group of facts? Let us examine an historic instance. Napoleon plans his escape from Elba, where the Allies have placed him under restraint in order to safeguard the peace of Europe. The act we shall here analyze is the formation of the plan, not the attempt to execute it. The case is not so simple as the typical experience just studied; for the first and second factors show a great variety of forms, some of which are bound to conflict. Thus, *desire* must include such comprehensive ends as the towering ambition of the Emperor to control the destinies of the entire Continent, the quest for an effective political unification of France, the impulse, partly benevolent, to ameliorate the economic conditions of a people just emerging from the most devastating social upheaval in their history. The second factor embraces a knowledge of the military resources of the Powers in league against him—Austria, Russia, Germany, and England—as well as a discriminating appraisal of his own personality and the appeal which he might still make to the sympathies and affections of the French. The decision to escape is a complex moral transaction which yet deserves to be considered as one whole. If we extend the field of interest and make it embrace the execution of the plan, terminating in the disastrous conflict at Waterloo, we have a gigantic

program of moral endeavor requiring the genius of a Shakespeare for its full dramatization.

The point we are stressing in this chapter is the need of analyzing every unit in behavior as an independent member of the moral series. This is the attitude of civil law. "The bodily movements," says Austin, "which immediately follow our desires of them, are the only human acts strictly and properly so called. For the events that are not *willed* are not acts; and the bodily movements in question are the only events which we will."² It may be objected that civil law is different from morals in that it can take cognizance only of facts that are perceptually discerned; it has nothing to do with an unexpressed trend of thought. It therefore deals with concrete cases, single exertions of will, events that can for the time be entirely separated from all other facts in the agent's experience. It is this consideration that makes it extremely important for any man who has been charged with an actionable offense to establish a complete alibi. If he can prove to the satisfaction of the court that he was present at another place at the specific hour when the crime was committed, he is perforce relieved of the charge and his case dismissed. At the same time, the court will insist on knowing all the incidents that led up to the act in question—his movements prior to the act, his habits of life, his usual rendezvous—all *material* facts, but the essential point is the consummatory deed. The truth or falsity of the accusation lies there.

Does ethics place like emphasis on the particularity of the act? Conflicting answers have been given to the question. Some argue that the motivating aim is the sole matter in dispute, others that the consequences of the deed are the sole criteria of moral value. Both elements are significant; but they are *aspects* of the case, *not the case itself*; they are contributory factors without which, indeed, the act could not be complete, but which, separate and alone, do not constitute the ultimate values of the act. In the given

² "Lectures on Jurisprudence," I, 409.

case the question which the historian must settle is: Did Napoleon organize a plan for release from involuntary internment? It may be said without reserve that the formation of such a plan would be a normal expression of human behavior; it would be a distinct and concrete act and at the same time an integral member in an extended series of acts that make up moral conduct in a determinate field. Thus, the Napoleonic plan will either find an adequate means of realization; or it will sleep in the minds of its makers; or, if discovered, will meet with condemnatory proceedings. In any event, the fruition of the plan will involve a new and related action, perhaps entirely different from what was expected, and with it all a new affirmation of will. Each act, however, is independent and must be judged on its own merits. We should discard all irrelevant matter and confine our analysis to the actual intention of the agent. In short, the business of ethics is to assess the value of the committed act.

We may pause for a moment to point out one distinguishing feature of the moral act. How does it differ from the æsthetic? We study with consuming interest the discoverable forms of beauty. Why does this seascape with its rugged headlands, its curving shore and undulating plain, move the observer to sympathetic approval? Matters of taste may awaken discordant feelings, but matters of æsthetic judgment evoke a common assent. In the formulation of practical ends, however, the decision is rarely unanimous. "O marvellous harmony," exclaims Kant with subtle irony, "What Emperor Charles V wants, that Francis I of France wishes also—namely, Milan!" In fact, the emotional reactions may be identical, whatever the choice happens to be, but the underlying motives may be so far apart as to make us wonder whether the two men live in the same moral universe. There is therefore something in the contents of the moral act that gives it greater significance to the average man than any conception of beauty. We are obliged to study the motive and the intent, the desires and the kind of thing desired, before a true moral judgment can

be reached. Hence, a systematic analysis of mental phenomena is imperative as a prerequisite to the determination of consistent moral values.

3. A Moral Act Must Possess Universal Quality.

The moral act is something more than a momentary event in the changing experience of the agent. Does it possess any permanent elements, a universal quality that can relate it to other similar acts? It is liable to be repeated and must therefore partake of certain enduring properties that have already appeared in his perceptions. Whether by the influence of private reflection or of public imitation, all moral behavior is described in terms of general concepts. In either case, the presence and authority of memory signify that the act is not a detached and unrelated fact of consciousness but a *type* of behavior embodying the fixed tendencies of the agent. Napoleon, we may suspect, did not for the first time conceive a plan of escape from a difficult situation. The resources of the animal mind suggested its form and his own career furnished abundant examples of the component parts of such a scheme. Hence, memory as well as instinct is a law of nature, and its significance for moral conduct is enormous. Thus, it would be vain to entertain a sense of obligation to one's neighbor if memory could give no clear instruction as to who the neighbor is or on what grounds the claims of obligation rest. The face of Europe would have been wholly altered had the Allies forgotten the reasons which forced the Corsican conqueror into involuntary seclusion. Experience and theory alike insist on the critical importance of the principle of regularity in the return of familiar ideas. The continuity of moral behavior is based on this assumption.

But does this yield the universal quality which ethics requires? Can we assume that an act is morally approved merely because it has been automatically reproduced in behavior or because we have half consciously repeated what our associates are accustomed to do? Plainly, such

action has no intrinsic ethical merit. (1) Action is only moral when its meaning is expressed in general concepts capable of being understood by succeeding generations. Josiah Royce has written with his usual charm upon the ingratiating beauty of loyalty.³ It is an honorable principle of conduct both in primitive society and in the cultured communities of the modern world. Is the connotation of the word the same for both? It embraces in each those interests which command the affection and respect of the group. The "causes" which excite loyal support are utterly different in moral tone and intellectual values. The totem for the one and the superb devotion to truth or honor for the other represent the wide diversity of causes. Yet the essential meaning is the same. Loyalty is a universal concept created by the fundamental needs of moral living. It has the same right to an independent status as the more physical appetitions of hunger, thirst, and sex impulse, or the primitive emotions of love, hate, and anger. Whatever is incessantly repeated has universal and objective character, and loyal adhesion to a cause belongs to that class. We may, then, deduce that the cardinal virtues—justice, courage, temperance—are primarily the fruits of repeated action, understood and approved by the reflective mind as necessary and veracious expressions of the native properties of mankind.

But given the concept as the interpretation of behavior, we may next inquire (2) whether it is simply a *name* for action or whether it must be accepted as an obligatory form of conduct. A new factor is introduced, called by such terms as duty, sense of right, moral authority, dictate of reason, conscience. It implies that the concepts of loyalty, veracity, justice, should be deliberately incorporated into our manner of thought. We then have a situation very different from that which confronts the artist or the logician. We should never suggest to the one that he *ought* to strive for the representation of beauty or to the other that he *ought* to deduce nothing but true conclusions from his authentic

³ "Philosophy of Loyalty," Ch. 3.

argument. To neither of these is a choice open; they can do but one thing. The moral actor, on the other hand, faces two contradictory courses, and the conviction that he *ought* to take one rather than the other comes to him with overwhelming authority. He may decline to obey the command, but he cannot alter its terms. So insistent is this urge as recorded in history, in drama, and in the transactions of the individual mind that we are bound to reckon with it in any study of moral phenomena. It is just as clearly a function of the human mind as is the effort to think logically or to express æsthetic feelings in creations of art or by the silent admiration of the eye. Furthermore, the universal quality rests not alone in the perpetuity of the sense of obligation but also in the imperative tone it gives to every type of action. Loyalty is a fine moral virtue, but we must examine critically the ends to which its zeal is to be directed. Thus, it is my duty to seek the unemotional facts in my scientific research, to be unmoved by censure or reproach or threat, to speak the truth without fear or reservation, to hold to my deductions until good evidence yields a better solution to the problem. In every case the moral act carries with it an inescapable constraint that points to an object beyond the confines of the immediate field of behavior.

To these two elements of universal value, the concept and the sense of obligation, we may add a third (3), namely, that the facts of moral deportment may be classified according to the terms of well-defined laws. Scientific data, we have already argued, obtain worth and interest insofar as they can express general modes of reaction. In the study of ethics we propose to examine some of the most important facts in conscious behavior—the physiological organism, the function of habit and character, the content of emotions, the principle of control, the making of the moral judgment, the structure of the independent self. In addition to the materials which underlie moral effort, there is the problem of an adequate explanation of the object which effort has in view and the suitable means for reaching it.

The theory of ethical values demands careful consideration. Typical solutions have been suggested in ancient and modern speculation, and these must be analyzed with sympathetic attention in order to formulate a workable system. We then turn to some of the conspicuous problems which have occupied the mind of observer and experient and finally attempt to expound the meaning and application of the moral sanctions, their stern reality and their pervasive influence. It is futile to make an extended analysis such as this without the preliminary assumption that moral action embodies a universal quality comparable to that which the most objective science, as physics or biology, finds in its tractable subject-matter.

4. Every Moral Act the Expression of a Synthetic Mind.

It is by no means an accident of human speech that action is inevitably referred to a constant subject. Remove the first personal pronoun from our vocabulary, and the continuity of behavior would be seriously threatened. Memory, we said, makes behavior regular; the idea of self converts it into a permanent and controlling whole. We shall later trace the development of this sense of conscious unity; here we are concerned with the relation of the self to the genesis and meaning of the moral act.

We may allow at the start that when we say, "I intend to do my duty by my family," or, "I desire to be a worthy citizen of the Republic," we have in mind a fixed distinction between an independent agent, the ego, and a specific course of conduct which the agent proposes to follow. The distinction here is not fictitious, as in the dramatic contrivance of the poet who permits his hero, a Peer Gynt or a capricious Hamlet, to assume many inconsequential postures in order to emphasize the versatility of personality. The self is one reality and its public performance is another. The Behaviorist, who holds a fair portion of the stage at the moment, may refuse to admit the validity of the thesis. He may argue with much heat but not much light

that actions differ from the central unity only in a logical sense; the observer notes these two aspects of behavior; they do not exist as separate events. We need not debate the matter here; it is quite the same for our purpose whether the distinction is a matter of judgment or whether it is a consistent datum of experience. The practice of the race is strictly to separate the two elements, and history proceeds on that assumption. Hence, when I allege that I intend to do my duty by my family, I take for granted that I am able to express my private capabilities in several ways, each distinct from the synthetic mind. One mode of expression is affection, in which the object of desire is necessarily distinguished from the subject, and the relation between them, therefore, is a matter of experience different from the responding mind. Another mode is a definite parental obligation, which often requires sacrifice of time and bodily strength for its proper discharge. The point is that we are aware of organic activities, and we are aware of the attempt to pursue them. Neither is confused with the other, because the function of each is separately defined.

One further consideration must be mentioned, namely, that it is the synthetic mind that makes the personal action possible. Let us suppose that we have registered the intention of being a worthy citizen of the state. The channels into which our energy flows may be exceedingly varied, but they start from a common center. We are obliged to bow to a system of law organized under the ægis of government and controlled by its offices. If we come into collision with its behests, we must seek rehabilitation by surrendering our private opinions and even rights and accepting the terms of its sanction—fines or imprisonment or reprimand. The act of trespass and the act of recovery spring from the same supervisory mind and have no meaning apart from its private decisions. Again, the patriotic impulse is the action of mind directed to a specific end, for instance, the offer of my person, my advice, or my material goods in support of the interests of the state. The incentive may vary—fear or desire for protection or vanity or pure affection—but the

judgment that guides is ultimately that of the conscious self. Still further, as a resident of the country I am bound to contribute a portion of my time and energy to obtaining the means of livelihood in a regular occupation such as a business, a profession, or the civil service. It is the same undivided self that coördinates objective and diversified events into a common form of expression such as recognized moral virtues—honor and integrity—in the pursuit of vocational aims. Some critics have argued that methods of honesty can be learned only in the hard school of experience, that they are forced upon us by circumstances, and not voluntarily adopted. In certain cases this may be true; but it is also true that honest dealings never issue from unmoralized minds; they embody the basic desire for rectitude which reflective thought engenders. We shall discuss in due course each of these forms of actions, always assuming that they represent the aims and purposes of a synthesizing mind.

So far we have studied the principle as applied to public and observable behavior. But behavior is the correlate of thought, and thought breaks up into myriad different ideas. We may agree with Kant that moral conduct begins with judgment, though it does not stop there. The original motive and the first intention must be explicitly defined before action can be said to be truly moral. Unreflective behavior has no ethical values. Hence it is essential that we should determine how the coherent group of moral judgments are formed in the consciousness of the agent. In analyzing Napoleon's desire for escape, we referred to the animating impulse behind his decision, perhaps the ambition to make himself master of Europe's destinies. It is a truism to say that the greatest events in human history have had their birth in the sanctuary of the human spirit. They appear first as simple concepts in an active intelligence. Then they enlarge their scope, gather about them familiar ideas whose intensive power men have not yet suspected, and suddenly the principle of renunciation in Buddha, the moral protest against wrongs in Æschylus' portrait of Prometheus, or

social brotherhood in Mazzini bursts in fiery fervor upon an unexpectant world, carrying custom and cherished dogma inevitably before them. Such ideas are not floating images on an uncharted sea; they are the property of comprehending minds, anchored to the solid facts of experience. Every mind has its changing moods and its diversity of interests. Different minds entertain different lines of thought. In every instance they bespeak the governing character of the self; this is the essence of moral judgment.

5. The Moral Act and Its Social Environment.

It is difficult to evade the question which meets us here: Does morality depend on the mutual intercourse of similarly equipped persons, or can a solitary man conduct his career by laws which he imposes on himself? The debate is largely academic, since neither history nor anthropology furnishes evidence to prove that mankind ever existed in a "state of nature." The facts of body and mind are sharply against the hypothesis. Both insist on the empirical reality of the processes we have just examined. They point to the social aspects of human behavior. Beginning with the physical law that life is generated by the union of the opposite sexes, we advance to the second stage, which exhibits the parental care of the young during the period of helplessness. Man's behavior is anticipatively envisaged in the action of certain types of animals, but the attention bestowed upon the human infant is explicit and prolonged, intermitted only under the stress of such emotions as fear, chagrin, or jealousy. Comparative analyses are hard to make; but, unless every symptom is wrong, the affection of the parent for the child possesses at least some of the quality of social interest. Even if we construe affection as the assertion of proprietary rights, we still have the element of moral relationship which requires explanation. Or if we take affection to be a kind of normal curiosity whose object at the moment offers attractions of the first order, we are again met by the fact of an interest beyond our own

body. The simple data of experience confirm the hypothesis that man is a social being.

The hypothesis is further supported by the tendency to objectivity which distinguishes man from all other animate creatures. Language is the symbol of communal sympathy. Physical proximity may satisfy the ordinary organic instincts, but intelligence that forecasts the future by the help of the past, that grasps the sequences of cause and effect together with their meaning for the race, that determines what kind of behavior *ought* to be followed in order to attain a desired end, such intelligence demands a direct and effective instrument of communication. Specifically, language is the vehicle of conceptual judgments, and it is ultimately embodied in visible signs. If we had nothing else, this gift alone would demonstrate nature's intentions respecting the scope and value of social intercourse. The force of the proof is confirmed by the use of language in moral transactions. It is doubtful whether the standards of character and conduct could ever have been framed apart from the exchange of ideas in men's decisions as to duties and rights.

We shall consider the subject more at length in the succeeding pages, and may therefore sum up the present argument with the observation that moral behavior is feeble and inept except as it is guided by the sympathetic interests of the group.

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CHAPTER III

THE HUMAN ORGANISM

We have assumed in our examination of the moral act that the first object of scientific study is the nature of the individual agent. Two points of departure are open to choice: either we may survey the modes of human intercourse in an established community, or we may determine the intrinsic properties of the single person and proceed from these as types to an analysis of the moral forces in the group. The first method was followed by Bentham in his "Morals and Legislation," where he formulated the modern creed of Utilitarianism, the second by Plato and Aristotle in their effort to show the parallel between individual citizens and the collective state. We shall adopt the latter as being more in keeping with the principles already espoused, that moral acts are concrete and self-contained wholes and that such acts imply and require the presence of a directing mind.

To this reason we may join another of even more fundamental import, namely, that the senses give us exact and reliable presentations of the outer world. Each experience embraces a definite situation taken from our environment; it is a factual response to an existing stimulus. The universe is not, as some thinkers insist, a continuous stretch of substance out of which the intellect constructs its own figures, giving such names as suit the kind of feelings aroused. Every object that arrests our attention is an independent body, endowed with a character peculiar to itself. It sustains explicit relations with neighboring objects and is subject to change of form and position under the influence of forces which it cannot control. The objects we are describing include all the classes studied by the natural

sciences—inorganic bodies, plants, sentient organisms, and finally man. We may therefore isolate a representative member of the human race and examine his internal qualities and his modes of behavior.

1. Man's Behavior and the Physical World.

Man, it appears, is no exception to the rule that physical law governs all the constituent parts of the world with equal force. Religion and poetry have imagined that spiritual excellence could lift him above the embracing toils of mechanism and insure to him a sphere of independence for the pursuit of his ideals. The conception is futile. It is true that Shakespeare makes Cassius say—

Not stony towers, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeons, nor strong links of iron,
Can be retentive to the strength of spirit,

but he later admits that the ultimate recourse for the smitten soul is the Stoic's Open Path, whereby he may crush out the last spark of the body's vitality. It is, therefore, the part of prudence to accept the imperial edicts of Nature and recognize that ethics cannot neglect the prescriptions of the physical sciences but must find in them the true foundations of virtuous character. What are these urgent laws?

(a) We begin with the principle of energy and its conservation. In many cases it is extremely difficult to obtain an adequate demonstration of the law, owing the variety of forms which energy assumes. How, for example, shall we set up an exact equation between the bundle of fagots kindling into flame and the heap of ashes on the ground plus the scattering gases in the air? The rule is that no energy is lost, and the rule is universally applicable to the facts of physics. Is the rule also valid for the calculation of moral experience? At least four of the classical commandments regulating conduct involve a tacit acceptance of its terms. To make a personal attack upon a fellow creature with a view to maiming his body or taking away his life, to invade

the sanctities of the opposite sex without the approval of love or law, to filch from one's neighbor some treasure, small or great, upon which he depends for support, to cast an eye of desire upon another's possession even though no attempt be made to seize it—these clearly come within the area of the law we are discussing. For every time the moral command is violated a change takes place in physical relations. Both offender and offended suffer a certain strain in the nervous system, entailing a disturbance of individual energy. For the offended this means a distinct lowering of the emotional resistance; for the offender, a temporary heightening of his inner gratifications. Will this exchange of energy be permanent, or will the law of retribution turn the scales ultimately against the offender? History would seem to show that the adjustment is usually in favor of the victim of the attack, either while he is still in life or by the enlargement of his prestige after death. But in the main there is no loss in social energy as represented by the feelings of individual agents. Instead, men are trained to meet similar emergencies with a more explicit understanding of their personal relation to the forces of their physical environment.

But we have said nothing as yet about a class of facts that have been ordinarily excluded from the operation of the law. Does thought possess a power that may be automatically transformed into magnetic energy? Is a moral ideal such as honesty an exact equivalent of physical force and expressible by the same mathematical formulas? It is admitted that the adoption of a dominant idea carries with it a muscular exertion mediated through the nervous system, and this exertion may be measured in terms of the amount of work done. Furthermore, the same muscular activity is likely to be taken up by a neighboring subject who repeats the movements of the former and thus makes changes in the structural elements of his body, culminating in the cortical adjustments corresponding to the representation of a new idea. This is the causal phase of the idea's influence. But, as Mr. B. M. Laing has well argued, there is

another and more appropriate expression of the idea, namely, its total meaning in the career of the subject, or what he calls its *value*. He writes:

Value may be identified with desire, or at least with certain forms of desire; and as desire is a cause or force, value has been taken to be one too. Hence, moral force, moral strength, is spoken of as if it were a moral cause. But it is analyzable into a causal factor which is psychological, and an element of value connected with the object towards which the psychological factor is directed. So also moral enthusiasm, moral sincerity, and moral earnestness are psychological matters, though implicating values; but values have not become more powerful factors or causes because a person is a moral enthusiast; the more powerful force is psychological and effects the realization of values, not the values themselves.¹

We may agree with this fertile thinker in holding to a distinction between force and value, the one being the function of consciousness as a fact in psychology, the other the appraisal of what the act means to the development of character. The point we shall insist upon is this: that the law of conservation as a rule in physics can have no bearing upon the application of moral values, except as they embody the system of desires which constitute the ultimate of all behavior. Desires operate through the medium of the sense organs, and their intensity and enduring power may be tested by the usual instruments of science. But the meaning of desire is not determinable by the intensity of the impression it makes on the mind, nor by the number of minds it may affect, nor by the lasting power of the idea. These categories do not apply. Value does not impress; it enlightens. It informs us what the given object or idea means to us. Consider a situation like this. At a certain point in their history, the French people reached the conclusion that their private rights had been invaded. The church, the crown, the nobility, had usurped every fraction of corporate authority in the state. Under the tuition of Voltaire and Rousseau, public sentiment awoke to a realization of its

¹ "Study in Moral Problems," p. 68.

accumulated wrongs. It capitalized the penetrating studies which philosophers and publicists had made of the fundamental principles of government and the mode of its effective administration. The value of personality and its inalienable rights became the burden of the new moral dogma. It is possible to trace the causal factors in the revolutionary program—the overturn of the throne, a revision of the economic system, the new alignment in social relations, and even a change in the modes of individual behavior. But the essence of the Revolution lay, not in the objective movements, but in the new method of moral evaluation. No doubt the law of conservation maintained its true equilibrium throughout the gigantic outer changes. But moral progress has to do only indirectly with the mechanics of the body; it concerns the meaning which the mind assigns to its dominating ideas. Clearly, the principle of equality which France learned at so great a cost of blood and treasure is a distinct advance in the knowledge of human character and its moral potentialities.

(b) The second datum drawn from physics is that of order and sequence, which are other names for space and time. These two ingredients are the stuff of which the world is composed. Space appears to the eye, not in the form of indefinite extension, but as a congeries of visible bodies organized into an unchanging order. Recent speculations have transferred this conception to the minute aggregations of force called electrons. Early observers described the symmetry, balance, *justice*, or right relation of bodies, and by these terms they meant the tendency of all bodies to regain a sequence momentarily lost. Thus, Heraclitus argues that the sun has its “measures,” its varying intensities, as represented by the passage of the orb to its zenith and then to its decline. Not one thinker but many have supposed the firmament to be pervaded by an unconscious Reason, a Tension, a Principle of Cohesion, which the mind of man may properly make the model of sober and sustained judgment. Aurelius on the throne and Epicuretus in the pit taught that impulse or passion, token of the

sudden gust of the tempest, cannot be the fit symbol of Nature's action. The reason of man belongs to and must emulate the solemn procession of the stars, the steady progress of the sun, the unbending resistance of the mountain oak. There is order in the universe; there must be order in men's thinking, too.

It is imperative, then, that so far as possible the modern mind should follow the same set of laws, as they have been developed under the more exact treatment of the new sciences. The law of compensation—which is another name for natural order—will illustrate the significance of all the others. Thus, the change of seasons, the alternations of heat and cold, rain and frost, the plethora of gain one year and a negating dearth the next—these are conditions that seriously affect the bodily life of mankind. They seem to denote an uncertainty in the movements of the physical world. A startling parallel is furnished by the phenomena of social experience. The wealth of the earth is indiscriminately committed to men and nations; the treasures of body and mind are oftentimes so unevenly distributed as to shock our sense of justice and rectitude. Yet in both fields of observation the principle of compensation is at length vindicated. The balance once disturbed is ultimately restored. The process of change which Heraclitus noted is now seen to be another aspect of the law of conservation. Yet, while the conservation of energy as a law is confined strictly to the interactions of physical bodies, including that of man, the principle of compensation assumes a more spiritual form. Men learn that the loss of material goods is compensated by the enrichment of the intellectual life. Energy must be supplemented by reason in attaining the permanent order which human experience requires. Hence the theory of Stoicism is not without its influence upon the conclusions of modern thought.

The sequence of time as well as the order of space helps us to understand the physical purposes of human existence. The importance of the time-consciousness was demonstrated by Immanuel Kant in his study of the elements of

experience. Later thinkers, like Bergson, insist that time should not be defined as a series of concrete and unitary perceptions, but rather as the mind's capacity for taking in at a glance such vast movements as a geological era or the upward sweep of the vital impulse from the rudimentary organisms to the complex brain of the primates. We may agree on one point, that the apprehension of time is the unmistakable mark of reflective intelligence. Memory for the animal is an automatic reproduction of past sensations; for man it is the restoration of an experience deliberately claimed as his own. Hence, the consciousness of time provides one of the chief foundations for an effective moral program. The mind that can discern the sequence of events, their logical relations, and their moral implications is in a position to fashion the habitudes of enduring character. Praise and blame, merit and disgrace, crime and punishment—in general, aim and result—are unmeaning terms without the factor of time. The major literatures of the world have incorporated the same imperial concept—Nemesis, Tartarus, Karma, Inferno, some element that binds the present act to its inevitable consequences. Experience and judgment agree in making time as we perceive it the exact equivalent to the objective fact. Hence, no ethical theory which does not study conduct as a constitutive part of the current movements of natural bodies can possibly have weight with modern thought.

But here we must urge caution. Granted that the behavior of man has its locus in the order and causal sequences of the world, does this imply that the laws of the physical sciences can by themselves and alone explain the events both of muscular and mental activity? Walter Bagehot in his "Physics and Politics" proposed to examine every phase of civil government—laws, sanctions, institutions, national temper—under the white light of scientific experiment. The mathematical accuracy which Aristotle sought in the principle of proportion as the symbol of justice was modernized by the application of exact formulas, leading ultimately to the standardization of social behavior. But

Bagehot failed, as every like experimenter must fail.² The differences in the type of facts to be examined are too momentous to be reconciled in so summary a manner. There is one set of rules for the action of bodies primarily described by the terms of magnetic attraction; there is another set of rules for bodies taking the form of living organisms. It is an error to attempt to identify them. Physics and ethics, while they have many points in common, disagree in certain important particulars. The body of man occupies a milieu where the dynamic and kinetic forces of nature are always at work. There is, however, a supplementary property, a system of values dictated by man's intelligent attitude towards the world, that cannot be found in any other physical situation. "His existence and action," says Professor Boutroux, "impose on nature modifications which she herself cannot understand."³ Man explores the crevices of her mines and extracts the gross metals which his furnaces transmute into infrangible steel. He quarries the glistening marble from her hills, carving it into the emblems of exquisite art. He chains the force of gravity by his unerring skill and erects those stately temples of worship that for ages enshrine his appreciation of divinity. In short, man's genius, his primitive intellect, can seize upon any and every form of material substance and endow it with the character of moral worth. Especially can he take his own body, which, unrestrained, would revert to type, and compel its muscles and sinews to express the lofty ideas of courage and sobriety.

"When man in ancient Greece," says Boutroux, "became conscious of himself and reflected on his condition, he believed himself the sport of an eternal, impenetrable, and irresistible power. . . . After bewailing his servitude, he found courage to pronounce judgment upon this inflexible power. . . . He was astonished that he had submitted to this shameful yoke without examining it. He attempted to

² Cf. Address by W. B. Munro, "Physics and Politics," in *Science*, March 2, 1928.

³ "Contingency of the Laws of Nature," Ch. 7.

escape from and break it; and he did break it. No longer did the world dictate laws to him; he dictated laws to the world. He became aware of his freedom." We may then sum up our thought in a single sentence: The rules of physics consider the unanalyzed facts of behavior; the rules of ethics determine how these facts may be interpreted according to the system of ends required for the pursuit of virtuous conduct.

2. Man's Behavior and His Physiological Equipment.

We now turn to an inspection of man's inner world, the seat of his individual and organized activity. It is inevitable that we should note the significant fact that every living body possesses a form of identity not ascribable to stone or magnet or crystal. Both types of bodies can be distinguished from their environment as units in a physical series. Both types obey, in general, the primary laws which we have just discussed. The organic body, however, whether of plant or of infusoria or of man, has its own peculiar principles of coherence: it grows, as we say, from within; it reproduces its kind in regular order; and it has the power of regenerating any damaged member from adjacent parts. These three properties are common to all biological species; they play a commanding role in the development of moral behavior.

(a) The growth of the human body and ultimately the preservation of its life depend solely on the selective function of mind. This function differs in no respect from the capacity of the insect or the plant except in the factor of intelligence. In the behavior of man it is reënforced by his aptitude in framing and carrying out an appropriate plan. The problem before him is the consideration of the several objects in nature which will serve to nourish his body. For the aboriginal savage the problem is comparatively simple. The fruit of the tree, the fish of the stream, the denizens of the wood, offer him suitable food, if he can possess himself of them. He has to make trial both as to their nutritive values and their agreement with his taste. The problem

enters upon a more serious phase when one human tribe comes into collision with another, or when it pushes beyond the margin of natural abundance. The struggle for existence is thrust suddenly on the single group, and men are forced by dint of hard labor to wrest a livelihood from the reluctant soil. In the first case, a subtle sense of kinship clashes with the primordial claims of individual interests. The elementary principles of economics are born in the ensuing confusion. Economics at once becomes a factor in biology, whether in the crude relations of primitive clans or in the exacerbated conflicts of civilized communities, whether in the parceling out of jungle thickets or in the apportionment to competing nations of vast sectors of a continent. The issue in every instance is the same—how can the body be nourished by appropriate food?—but gains in complexity with the refinements of culture, and at length is couched in some such terms as these: How can the inherent properties of intellect and sentiment be best developed through the legal possession of nature's concealed treasures? It thus appears that the selective powers of mind and body are everywhere at work. Ethics and economics seem to be next of kin.

(b) The second principle which gives coherence to an organism is that of reproduction. It assumes the quality of a prescriptive law in all species below man. As a function it is there normally discharged, and its normal discharge guarantees the continuance of the type. A radical change takes place on the level of human endeavor. Discrimination between members of the group is set down as an effective rule, sometimes imposed by authority, sometimes originated by the unguided impulse of the individual. The discrimination goes even further in certain communities; it prompts a man or woman to decline entirely the office of parenthood. The motives influencing against marriage are manifold: in the case of women, physical fear, disinclination for the intimacies of the marriage relation, a shrinking from the responsibilities of family, an unwillingness to sacrifice personal comforts or the opportunities for a career; in the case

of men, speaking generally, a conviction that the cares and absorptions of the home will slowly disqualify them for the competitions of business or profession in an extremely specialized age. But the proportion of voluntary celibates is relatively low. The urgent call of sex, the unwitting purpose to provide for the future of the race, act as categorical imperatives in the soul. They are integrating forces within the area of man's personality; they do not furnish the sole incentive to moral behavior, but their influence is so pervasive and continuous that no study of human life would be complete without a due examination of their meaning. Ethics is a companion-piece to physiology.

Given this natural tendency unhampered by a dissenting will, and duly controlled by social habit, the issue of the union is a new and independent being endowed with the same traits as the parents and capable of assuming its private position in the same environment. The problem is embodied in a new and constructive function known as the care of the young. Observation shows that human and sub-human species alike recognize the necessary character of the function, but they differ in one particular. The human infant is born within the precincts of a family, where father and mother usually assume the joint burden of guardianship. The difference is significant; it is rightly regarded as the first step in organizing the reactions of moral behavior. The validity of this claim has been challenged by many thinkers, by Proudhon, for example, who identified the family with the institution of property, and, since "property is theft," insisted that all family ties should be broken and children educated under the supervision of the group. Still, the primary advantage of the traditional family—the union of two types of temperament, male and female, in the care of the child—remains as its greatest safeguard, and at the same time prepares it for its truly constitutive place in organized society.

(c) The third property of the organism is its tendency to repair the broken tissues by drawing on the neighboring parts. In this physiological tendency man is again at one

with the whole organic world. The initial source of harm is contact with the brute forces of nature. Lightning, whirlwind, floods, rocks, briars, are the confirmed foes of living bodies. But over against the liability to hurt lies the power of the body to heal. The wound in the hand slowly closes through the influence of vital fluid transferred from adjacent tissues. To the primitive mind, the cure is effected at the instance of some favoring divinity; to the man of empirical thought, it is evidence of the inherent affinity between the chemical constituents of the body. Scientific reflection, however, goes beyond the borders of chemistry and affirms that the function of regeneration distinguishes a living body inevitably from stock or stone.

But the problem is complicated by the presence of disease, a condition to some extent occasioned by man's conscious mistakes. We are advised by anthropologists that aboriginal social groups are tolerably free from physiological disorders except where climate or land produces systemic weaknesses. The portentous fact that confronts the civilized community is the appearance of an hereditary tendency towards specific types of disease. To this tragic story must be added the peculiar forms of mental disturbance which the constant draft on nervous energy entails. And to the long list of cerebral and bodily ills there must be joined the ills of spirit that grow in complexity with the advance of culture. The cure of disease waits not upon magic incantation or religious creed. Moralized intelligence is no longer willing to let "nature take her course." It demands a careful examination into the causes of disorder, and such an examination must be preceded by a satisfactory knowledge of the structure of the body and the emotional content of the mind. The progress of medicine is a witness to the struggle man is conducting against his disabilities. The progress is slow but real. In some respects at least, specialists in our day can better "minister to a mind diseased" and "raze out the written troubles of the brain" than in Shakespeare's day. Certainly in one particular we have passed far beyond the attainments of our forbears:

physiology and medicine are now strictly social disciplines, and so is psychology. Disease is no longer a judgment on individual sin; it is a bold threat against the safety of the community. Hence, the social sense requires its diagnosis and its cure.

3. Behavior as a Form of Consciousness.

From a study of the physiological elements, we pass to the consideration of a group of facts that seem to express more directly what we mean by the essence of man. Experience is the function of consciousness, and consciousness is associated with the network of the nervous system. To have the kind of behavior characteristic of man, there is need of just such a physical basis as man possesses and none other. We may accept this statement as a scientific truism, not seeking to determine the genesis of the conscious mind, but pointing out what services it may perform. Behavior on the human level presupposes certain fundamental psychical purposes which man has in common with the brute, such as resentment against intrusion, a tendency to organize his physical relationships—building a house and safeguarding his young—and even a groping inquiry into the future. Some writers on ethics are wont to classify these actions as instinctive and to assume that a sort of moral quality attaches intrinsically to them. Undoubtedly basic tendencies like these enter into man's conscious calculations. But they do not and cannot represent his own typical purposes, the function that belongs essentially to him and cannot be discharged by organisms on a lower scale. His distinctive purpose is the ability to make a conceptual judgment. How this power occupies and controls the lobes and cortices of the brain we shall not inquire. Suffice it to say that moral values have no meaning apart from the judgmental act as embodied in any choice between representative ends.

Now the primary rule of consciousness is that experience passes from one state to another. Psychology calls this the affirmation of desire. Mind is a system of desires beginning

with the simple appetite for food and ascending to the quest for universal knowledge. Accordingly, desires have a great diversity of content and the zestful interest in living hangs upon the sharp competition between them. While reserving the detailed discussion for the next chapter, we may premise here that individuality rests upon our adoption of one or more of the competing types. Literature delights to describe the indigenous "humors" of men—phlegmatic and sanguine, choleric and calm. On the pages of romance the sprightly affability of Mr. Pickwick contrasts with the somber evenness of a Dombey. The steady loyalty of Cordelia and the sinister ingratitude of her sisters flash in lurid colors from the brush of a master artist. Differences in temperament are congenital, we aver; they owe none of their intensity to our voluntary creation. Nature has made us thus, and we may acquit ourselves of all blame. But the problem in morals cannot be so brusquely settled. It is admitted that virtuous conduct is extremely uncertain if it have no determined mode of thought or action behind it. Aristotle's contention is well founded. There must be a body of choices already made to which the mind, in its new conditions, may confidently turn. Whether these habitual forms go down into the organization of the nervous system may be open to dispute, but that they make the individual what he is no candid thinker can successfully deny.

If every conscious act reflects the settled disposition of mind, no less does it record the changing tones of feeling. Feeling is the natural accompaniment of sentient action; it seems to tell us how fully or meagerly we have realized the basic purposes of our being. Thus, the slightest shock to a nerve-organ brings instant protest in the thrust of pain, while the gratification of a desire insures a distinct heightening of sensibility, known as pleasure. These are accepted facts in everyday experience, and they seem to be repeated in the behavior of the lower animals. It is therefore incumbent on the student to determine the place of feeling in the structure of the moral self. We may not abruptly adopt the extreme views of such schools of thought as teach that pain

is bound eventually to fill up the surplus of feeling and that we should consequently aim to annul the promptings of desire and seek an early dissolution.⁴ There are, indeed, persuasive arguments in such a theory, inviting the assent of despondent spirits when the vicissitudes of life have closed for the moment every avenue of escape. But the theory cannot be a logical answer to the soul's demand for fullness of experience. Pain, no doubt, while it lasts, is a more coercive counselor than pleasure. Yet no sufferer will voluntarily perpetuate the pangs of physical hurt except for a significant aim that can be attained through its offices, as, for example, with the Penitentes of Mexico. "It is almost impossible," says James, "for a man to cut or mutilate himself slowly and deliberately—his hand invincibly refusing to bring on the pain."⁵ The fact is that the sense of personal permanence is a mighty counterirritant to pain. Pain is protest, but it is also a challenge to action. Even in such subtle conditions of depression as those described by McDougall's "negative self-feeling," the resistance of the major will is emphatic.⁶

Pain that is fixed in membranes or muscles appeals to the skill of science for relief; but the "rooted sorrows" of the soul oftentimes defy the arts of the moral surgeon either to diagnose or cure. Still, the theory which we propose to expound in these pages has had its empirical formulas tried in the fires of crucial events, with the result that the system of desires and ends acting in harmonious relations will surely drill the edge from pain and give to pleasure its just place in the execution of a moral program.

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CHAPTER IV

SYSTEM OF DESIRES

We have thus far ascertained that the behavior of the moral agent is carried out against the background of definite physical and neural properties. It appears that these properties embody the only conditions under which consciousness as we know it can be developed. Or, to cite the instructive phrase of Professor Strong, these conditions enable us to explain "why the mind has a body." We may now proceed to examine the analytical factors involved in the conscious act.

Psychology has sometimes paused to justify the use of the word "activity." Can a process or state or situation be so characterized? Is not each of these, if not a dramatic description by the observer, at least nothing but a passive relation to a neighboring stimulus—in short, a reaction, not a positive act? In many common sympathetic reactions, is not the moral quality extremely ambiguous? Can the performance of one's duty to parents, for example, be more than the learned response repeated by habit and drilled into the mind by stern admonitions and liberal disciplinary measures? If that were true, would not the changes in the nervous system prove that we were dealing with causes of a strictly mechanical nature? Thus, the stimulus impinges on the end-organs, whether kinæsthetic or auditory, and by passage through the series of neurones and synapses ultimately elicits a unitary response in the brain. This in turn effects a suitable motor discharge in bodily movements.

Is this the whole story? Moralists are agreed that it is but a part of behavior; what the remainder is we shall attempt to unfold in the sequel.

1. The Form and Operation of the Mental Impulse.

The first fact to be noted in the behavior of an organism is that it *seems* to begin its motions without reference to any external body. Closer inspection, however, reveals the subtle connections we have just described. Still, the motions set up in a susceptible body like iron by the presence of a magnet differ perceptibly from the action of a living body. There is an attempt on the part of the organism to possess itself in some way of the powers belonging to the stimulating body. The attempt is coincident with life; it commences with the first breath; it continues unabated throughout the whole career, whether long or short; and it becomes the sole guaranty of the successful operation of all the physical functions. The human infant endeavors to extract sustaining food from its mother's breast. It makes a determined effort to move its arms and its legs and in due time its head. As soon as the orbit of vision is established, it seeks to fixate any bright object appearing before its eyes. These several events indicate an initiating force in the new-born babe. Men do not hesitate to adopt specific terms for identifying such acts—governing propensity (Perry), driving adjustment (Tolman), complex reaction (Watson), innate tendency, impulse, and instinct. Their origin may be open to doubt. One school insists that they are hereditary traits distinguishing a given type, for example, Man. Others are equally sure that acts called “instinctive” have been learned in the give-and-take of experience. But the reality of the tendency to discharge motor energy in a particular manner is not disputed. Now, since moral conduct is built on the foundation of such spontaneous discharges, we may properly examine them at nearer range.

The impulsive act is performed with a certain degree of awareness. We are conscious of a stirring within the body. Automatic movements like respiration, reflexes like winking or sneezing, proceed ordinarily without the slightest attention on our part, except as to the result. They depend strictly on the proximity of stimuli. If the oxygen in a

sunken submarine is exhausted, breathing becomes exceedingly difficult, and finally ceases. If a brilliant ray of light shoots across the face, the eyes close without conscious effort. The other type of action, however, demands a measurable amount of energy and is accompanied by a distinct lapse of time in its execution. Thus, walking is by many regarded as one of the elementary forms of conscious impulse, yet it necessitates the coördination of so many different muscles by the process of innervation that the adult observer wonders how a child can formulate the impulse and bring it to fruition. Indeed, the single element of balance is one of the most complicated of all human actions. Nevertheless the child bravely accepts the challenge and begins to walk. With a keen intuition of the fitness of traits, moralists have found in this impulse a true analogy of deliberate moral behavior.

Furthermore, the impulse contemplates a suitable end to be attained. It is not assumed that the end is expressly understood by the infant mind. The instinct of *prehension*—grasping for the presented object—seems almost automatic in its operation, but the purposive quality of the act is brought to the fore precisely when the hand is denied possession of the coveted good. This can only mean that intelligence is asserting its primordial rights even in so elementary an impulse. The end becomes defined more sharply as intelligence develops. Then the relations of the several tendencies settle into determinate molds; these “units of behavior” (Hocking) begin to set up correlative ends which we have agreed to call character. Such an impulse as that which drives us to repel intrusion on our domain—an attitude reached very early in man’s career—sets before the mind a prescriptive purpose supported by the corporate authority of the individual. It serves, moreover, to interpret man’s interest in his environment. It trains the mind to meet new and perhaps dangerous situations with prompt and effective measures. The startled subject may not be aware of the far-reaching significance of his act; he raises his hand to strike in obedience to what he

calls the "law of his nature;" but he opens the way to such grave consequences as the death of a neighbor and a permanent stigma on his own career. It is the business of morals to teach the impulse-following mind how to turn the impulse of resentment into the channels of virtuous and intelligent conduct.

Finally, impulse when once converted into action is inevitably succeeded by a feeling-tone either of pleasure or of pain. This association is very intimate; some writers, indeed, have identified their offices. One has but to notice the expression of pleasure on a child's face as he negotiates his first step to discover the close relation between effort and delight. The successful completion of the task alone accounts for the change in feeling-tone. But this very intimacy suggests that sometimes the effort may fail, since we cannot help observing the twitches of pain that often accompany the operation of the fundamental tendencies. Is it true, as many students of consciousness say, that the original impulse may alter its content and direction? The argument is based on the assumption that impulse is merely the coördination of nerve-organs in a given form of motor exertion. Hence, if the physiological processes undergo a change, a new bodily act will result. Yet it is difficult to deny the qualitative sameness of the action-forms—eating, speech, spontaneous imitation; they are repeated from generation to generation and are embodied in the behavior of every race of men.

The point we are making is that the situations in which the impulse comes to the surface may possess radically different traits. In tendencies, such as speech, which are attached to specific physical organs, no change can possibly occur. In more highly developed functions, like acquisition of a foreign object, we may credibly remove the center of impulse from the bodily member, for example, hand, and settle it in the conceptual judgment of mind expressed in one of a number of organic movements. The struggle we pass through in effecting the change will account for some of the vacillation in feeling-tones. Thus, if the tendency to

assert one's individual will be an original "unit of behavior," the creation of a moral Self endowed with unique dignity and worth represents a natural growth of the inherent tendency. Its true appreciation, when confided to the practical rules of conduct, will be reached only after painful discipline. So Dante found his path to self-expression in his love for Beatrice suddenly blocked by her untimely death. But impulse now has passed the bounds of semi-automatic reaction and entered the wider areas of desiderative thought.

2. Desire Directed Towards an End Intelligently Conceived.

The analysis of impulse has cleared the ground for the study of that motive of human endeavor called desire. Desire concentrates attention on a specific object. Experience proves by a multitude of instances that we cannot desire things in the mass, but must select a single object as our end. What do we mean, for instance, when we say we desire an established home? We may argue as Spinoza did that (1) all animals have this desire, since they make an effort to obtain shelter from the icy winds, the fiery heat, or the lurking foe. Is this our meaning? Or (2) do we mean that the constant passing from one point to another in the attempt to escape from the pains already suffered has left us fatigued and uncertain in our bearings like the hunted outcast of the tribe, and eager, therefore, to find a place of repose? Or (3) is the desire for residence stimulated in the mind through the recollection of the relief enjoyed by a temporary removal of the causes of fear, or perhaps by our perception of animals at rest in cave or tree out of harm's way? None of these conditions satisfies our definition of desire. We therefore turn to a final (4) alternative which we deem to contain the true aspects of the specific end, namely, a settled abode "which the desiring subject presents to itself as at once distinct from itself . . . and from other objects which might be desired but for the time are not."¹

¹ T. H. Green, "Prolegomena to Ethics," Sec. 121.

(a) What makes desire a unique feature of moral consciousness? We limit the word's use to the experience of man. Desire, in the first place, embraces an intellectual apprehension of the object to be gained. A strange but persistent fallacy has pursued the study of moral phenomena. Reason and desire have been set in direct contradiction to one another. It was alleged by the Greeks and repeated in part by modern writers like Butler and Kant that desires are the competing emotional tendencies of human nature, while reason is the sole and inerrant arbiter between them. The "empirical" character is composed of the constitutive impulses and passions, the "rational" character, of legislative judgments which direct the activities of conduct. The scientific fact is that desire looks to an end. But ends are not structural factors which biology might properly appraise; they are ideal conceptions conforming in every detail to the objective results which we hope to experience. Thus, we seek for an established residence, not merely as a retreat from the fury of the elements or the embittered controversies of the market place, but as a center where the deeper emotions of the soul are pivoted, where in quiet and peace we may search into the spiritual values of the world. In short, a distinct exertion of judgment is required to make plain the content of the object desired.

This is obvious even in the pursuit of strictly physical desires. What lure is there in the intoxicating draught that creates an almost irresistible temptation to quaff it? Is it the agreeable taste which is essentially different in quality and tang from the milder beverages of the table? Is it the return, in imagination, of the soothing lethargy that overtakes the casual drinker? These are animal enjoyments which the brute as well as man may possess. The problem is not as simple as this and should not be solved by an arbitrary, cut-and-dried pronouncement. If we study the state of mind of the victim, we shall find that he has, certainly at the outset, associated his desire with some well-defined intellectual end, such as the comradeship of his fellows, the opportunity to rid himself of harassing pains

such as business cares, sudden disappointment, disturbance in the domestic circle, or even the assurance that no harm can befall him by momentary indulgence, if only excess be avoided.

The same demands upon the understanding, but in greater degree, accompany the desires of the scientist who would push his conquests beyond the present frontiers of knowledge. In this case, desire is certainly not the stray impulse of a child seeking the gratification of his curious feelings in unfamiliar quarters. The search for nature's secrets is rooted in a preliminary evaluation of her more open laws. Experience and experiment have prepared him to describe in detail his conscious project—say, an inquiry into the structure of the atom or the relativity of motion and time. Such a desire is one of the most consuming passions of the mind. It cannot become an intelligible aim except when the inquirer realizes both the formidable proportions of the task and the significant results that may flow from a successful enterprise. But desire so conceived forms one of the stirring *motifs* in the drama of human achievement. It convinces the observer that moral behavior has left completely the field of elementary conation in its quest for responsible personal effort.

(b) Thus far we have considered the contents of the end, which could be instigating factors in desire only when they have been cognitively discerned. But the use of judgment goes beyond this point. Desire always looks to a goal which is chiefly, though not wholly, lodged in the processes of organic action. Can the goal be reached by the mere formulation of the wish? The history of every desire is that it encounters conflicting forces. The diverting influence may spring from another and more commanding desire. Persons of discretionary age can remember the enthusiasm with which they greeted a proposal to relieve suffering humanity by contributions from their own funds, only to be met by the counter current of self-interest, which seemed to clench the hand by an inflexible grip, the money remaining safely within it. But the thwarting of desire is not

always internal; it may be brought about by force of obtuse conditions. Desire differs from natural impulse; it does not sit quietly by when its way is blocked and await a possible change in its surroundings. Desire is aggressive. It scrutinizes the objects which interfere with its purposes and develops a method for clearing the obstructions from its path. The effort is thus preëminently intellectual. It is intellect engaged in one of its most engrossing tasks—the gratification of a personal wish. No struggle is quite so fierce or so devastating as this, no exercise in logical thinking quite so keen.

The career of Socrates is a case in point. He determined to teach the men of Athens to analyze the common concepts of social intercourse. He foresaw the bitterness of the opposition—the orthodox religionist who felt that an examination into the grounds of belief was a sacrilege or who thought that it would mean the virtual destruction of belief; the practical politician who saw a threat to his authority just as soon as the principles of government were thoroughly understood; the industrial leaders with their vested interests, their smug theory of property, their conviction that no man should be allowed to investigate the moral implication of any economic theory. The procedure of the teacher was simple: he made no attempt to influence the opinion of veteran citizens, for they were beyond help; he directed his attention to the youth, the men of the future, minds as yet unspoiled by the conventions of the group, souls plastic as the molded clay. He foresaw the frictions, the contentions, the possible dangers ahead; but he endeavored, as Green would say, to “bring different sensuous presentations into relation to each other as equally related to the single conscious subject.”² This means, then, that desire both in its logical content and in its outward fortunes makes insistent reference to a dominating principle of judgment. In fact, the series of ideas embodied in desire can have no meaning except when they serve the

²“Prolegomena to Ethics,” Sec. 132.

interests of the completed behavior, which we have agreed to call character.

3. Desires Naturally Grouped in a System.

It may be legitimately expected that desires which depend on an understanding of the natural processes of the body should gradually arrange themselves in a systematic order. Certain modern writers have insisted upon a common origin for all appetitions. Thus, Freudian psycho analysis contends that every matured desire may be traced to the primary impulse of sex. Since sex is the line of demarcation that effectually divides the race, and since the union of the sexes establishes the relation that has contributed the noblest impetus to moral development, Freud and his associates have fixed upon the erotic element as the sole source of the higher emotions. They cite the tendency, at the adolescent age, to center attention on a member of the opposite sex, generally older in years, who becomes an object of almost idolatrous admiration, sometimes to the exclusion of all other foci of interest. They point to the subconscious influence of the fundamental impulse in organizing the images of our dreams so as to produce pertinent physical effects, the dream being construed as the most "primitive form of expression of the human mind."³ They argue that the repression of this function as practiced by modern society is the originating cause of the distorted views of the meaning of life as well as of many localized mental disturbances.

The argument is arresting, but it does not convince. It is difficult to discover the properties common to the sexual appetite and all other desires. We may disregard the desire for food, which seems to be *fixated* (to use Freud's term) long before the symptoms of the central impulse appear, and turn to the more advanced forms of expression. How shall the insatiable greed for military conquest, the thrust man makes beneath the surface of the earth in order to

³ Van der Hoop, "Character and the Unconscious," p. 121.

uncover its treasures, the glamorous fancy of the poet as he ranges through the upper atmosphere of thought or pours his feelings into the moods of forest and sea, the silent brooding of the philosophic mind on the problems of nature and experience—how can these ends be said to take their temper and meaning from the psychic motions toward the opposite sex? In fact, the romantic love of a Petrarch or a Faust seems so far removed from the excitement engendered by the mere physical presence of the desired object that its beauty can only be appreciated when we reflect on the compensating position of man and woman in the economy of nature. For, granting that in the fall of Marguerite the unrebuked call of sex has its momentary triumph, Faust is still the product of ages of meditation on the rights of womanhood, the protective agency of man, the tender emotions stirred jointly within, the spirit of sacrifice that governs the new relation, and, finally, the subtle appeal of the unborn child.

If a single impulse fails to provide an adequate source for the desiderative tendencies of the race, shall we select a more general principle such as self-preservation as the explanatory cause? This was the method of Spinoza, and it has its values. For one thing, it serves to carry every conscious effort back to a single standard of reference, the identity of the private self. Yet, on examination, the principle proves to be not an original cause but a necessary property in every desire. It is better, therefore, to forego the quest for an initial and comprehensive impulse and seek rather to organize desires into their natural classes, which we shall find to be, first, desires terminating in external ends; and secondly, desires expressed in internal aims.

(a) When are the objects of desire external? In a certain sense all the objects of desire are outside the desiring consciousness, for every effort of mind sets in motion definite trends of behavior which eventually impinge on bodies other than our own. But in a peculiar manner the ends that are directed specifically on neighboring objects may be said to be external. We shall attempt no exhaustive

classification, but content ourselves with naming the typical cases. They will appear as units in a natural system which becomes more thoroughly articulated as experience widens and matures.

The desire for food places the subject in immediate contact with its material environment. From being satisfied with a limited variety of flesh and fruit at the start, the scope of desire grows with each succeeding conquest over nature's reluctant store. The change of kind of food creates new tastes and inclinations. It is a far cry from the uncooked fare of the primitive savage to the delicate viands upon the table of the Roman voluptuary. Yet the laws of economics which develop with the demand spring basically from the appetite for food. Furthermore, the rules of practical logic may claim that the first desire for accumulating wealth is rooted in the same original needs. Hence, the acquisitive sense and the sense of possession belong to the natural structure of thought. Both attitudes are distinctly real, and both lend themselves to the satisfaction of bodily appetites. Ends like these refer strictly to outward behavior; they occupy an extraordinarily large space in the endeavors of the race, whether in the bronze age of Greece or in the achievements of the Periclean era, whether in the prehistoric caves of southern France or in the splendid court of Louis XIV. Such desires are essentially *economic*, in the literal meaning of the word: they aim to fit the human creature into his necessary place of residence. Hence, the skill of the artisan, the genius of the architect, the aptitudes of a trader, farmer, or professional man, all draw their intuitions from the single desire for adjustment. Without such conditions, so Aristotle argues, true morality cannot exist; we must therefore understand the significance of every external object of desire.

There is a second objective aim radically different from the first: namely, man's desire for intercourse with his mates. We need not dispute with McDougall and others as to the primacy of this interest. It may be not an instinctive

tendency but merely a secondary attitude called sentiment.⁴ The most ancient witnesses testify that association begins with the union of the sexes, and, if clans are founded by the principle of descent, then the powerful appeal of sex will carry its influence up to the seat of government. It is here particularly that men's desires assume their most vigorous character, because, when clans are once set up, their interests eventually conflict and war ensues. Just what element in human nature leads to contention may not be quite clear—a desire for possession of others' goods, the stirrings of fear in the presence of strong competition for land or women, the simple desire to retain one's own acquisitions. The fact which theoretical and practical ethics alike must face is man's resolute effort to seize and hold the object upon which his desire is fixed. It is to deal with this appetency that civil government, *politics*, was instituted. The patriarch possessed all—flocks, herds, movable property, servants, and household—and only the stronger could dispute his vested rights. The statesmen of a later day are guided by the identical aim, an external end, denoting territory, armies and navies, thriving cities, and the people who trade therein. The same statesmen turn their eyes to nations beyond their own borders and prescribe terms of mutual intercourse. Each of these attitudes is an objective end, the embodiment of a causal desire. When we assemble and compare the two types of desire representing respectively the economic and the political interest of mankind, we have before us an organized system of ends governing the whole range of objective behavior.

(b) We turn our attention next to the interior desires of the mind. Aristotle is sure that such ends exist, fixed and unchangeable ends, "goods of the soul," in contrast with other purposes which, he holds, are subject to the chances of fortune.⁵ Taken together, they make up the truly virtuous character of the agent. At the same time, character must formulate itself in conduct, and conduct embodies directly

⁴ "Social Psychology," Ch. 5.

⁵ "Ethics," Bk. I, Ch. 8.

the ends we have just described. Internal desires are much more difficult to define, inasmuch as they have no concrete objects, visible and communicable, which can keep check on our speculative claims. Still, the ends are persistently before the behaving mind and call for explanation. What are these desires?

They would seem to embrace three distinguishable forms: the desire for truth, beauty, and virtue. The categories are hackneyed but none the less real. We may agree that even so secret a desire as a religious aspiration cannot wholly restrain its fervor within the spirit. The bowed head, the bended knee, the illuminated eye, bear eloquent witness to the sheer elation of spirit. Still, the end is private, though its expression be public. In the same way, the desire for true knowledge may command the unexpressed effort of mind for years at a time. Pass with Plato through the subtle arguments of the *Theætetus* dialogue, in which his aim is to disprove the theory that the truth of an idea like Justice can be discovered either by sensory perception or by the acceptance of current opinion. It is here that he introduces his celebrated encomium on the contemplative life. The lawyer and the law court fail to determine the meaning of just action. They are controlled by hearsay or precedent or the weight of personal authority. Plato makes bold to say that they are moved not by a desire to arrive at truth but by a desire to hit upon a working rule for the pragmatic settlement of the case. Contrast this treatment with the patient study of the philosopher, his neglect of common ambitions, his absorption in a single task. Time and circumstances, reputation and social rewards, signify nothing to him. He is searching for the universal meaning of the given concept. Justice is not, as in the vernacular, "doing one's own work;" it is the generic principle which covers all necessary relations between man and man in a rationally organized community. Hence, the projected end is not alone just and upright behavior but a clear understanding of its essential terms.

We may examine the other phases of internal desire in

the same way. Since the express purpose of this book is the determination of the objective ends of morality, we need but note its position in the system of desires and pass on to a consideration of the desire for beauty. Here again no one may doubt that the external world contains certain objects which correspond point for point with the perceptions of beauty in the soul. Beauty does not reside strictly within the area of conscious feeling, and nowhere else. Croce cannot be right if this is what he means.⁶ At the same time, the apprehension of an idea that reproduces the elements of beauty is certainly a reflective act. We cannot say whether or not—given a world where no beautiful objects were present—man could create a beautiful statue from his own unaided æsthetic imagination. The interaction of object and idea seems to be a necessary condition of artistic creation. At any rate, Michael Angelo's "David," with its huge hands and massive shoulders, its exaggerated musculature and unorthodox awkwardness, goes back to the master's conception of radiant youth for its instigating authority. The idea is slowly generated in his fertile brain, causing him to "scorn delights and live laborious days" in his effort to make real the immortal image. Desire for beauty is our private end, but, thanks to the nature of the idea, it demands and gets its public embodiment in a genuine work of art.⁷

Beauty with virtue and truth constitutes the trilogy of ends, but, if we may believe the judgment of the wise man, the greatest of these is virtue.

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⁶ "Theory of Æsthetics," Ch. 1.

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CHAPTER V

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONTROL

Desire, we agreed, is an integral member of an organic system by which the mind registers its behavior. It would be a cardinal mistake to regard the two types of desires as fixed in a necessary series with definite physiological reactions. System is primarily a term in logic, but its constitutive parts are drawn from the inductive materials of experience. Desires, then, are naturally related. Thus, the desire for association, sometimes called the gregarious instinct, has for man a peculiar significance when referred to primitive appetite for food. In an animal herd the common meal is unknown, even the domesticated dog having no appreciation of its collective value. The bird, to be sure, is reported as searching out and bringing back the worm for the sustenance of its fledgling. But this satisfies only the physical appetite. In man's behavior the union of any two desires is due to the integrating function which we describe in general as conscious mind. The description is necessarily vague, as is every simple scientific concept, including magnetism in physics and vital energy in biology; but the fact remains unchallenged that without such a concept the explanation of behavior is impossible. Professor Hocking points out that even Buddha, who was one of the most pluralistic of psychologists, "referred all desires to a single craving which he described as the craving for individuality or separateness of being."¹ Hence, if we discover in human conduct, as we must, a system of related impulses, we are obliged to follow the methods of logic in accounting for the nature and meaning of that system. The name we assign to the connecting force is unimportant—the *élan vital* of

¹ "Human Nature and Its Remaking," Ch. XI.

Bergson, the *libido* of the psychoanalysts, the *Will to Power* of Nietzsche, the *Conatus* of Spinoza, the *Self-distinguishing Desire* of Green; in every case there is definite control exercised by a common authority. How shall we state its terms?

1. Control and the Capacity for Forming Habits.

Aristotle was strongly of the opinion that the acquisition of virtue is the process of habituation—becoming accustomed to act in a given way. But habit cannot appear without an originating capacity. In this respect moral behavior differs from sense-perception. The existence of the eye carries with it the function of sight; you don't train your eyes to see—you forthwith look! On the other hand, no man acts virtuously merely because he happens to possess the capacity for virtuous action. Function and its discharge are two different though connected facts. Education is the mode of developing habits both in morals and in the arts. The opinion set down with elaborate details in the "Ethics" is in line with the best theories of our own day.² It collides sharply with the extreme Intuitionist dogma which considers that honesty can be discerned and practiced by a direct judgment, without the retarding process of habit. It denies the claims of Mechanism which identifies moral acts with the rigid automatic motions of the body; they seem to be learned, but this is a constructive illusion, for they can be explained precisely as we explain the tropisms of any inferior organism.

We may notice at once that habits are not the same as original tendencies of behavior, yet they have many similar qualities. Thus, a habit is regular in operation; it never varies from a prescribed form. The manner of passing a pedestrian or vehicle on the right side is firmly fixed in American custom, and any deviation, designed or not, is sure to give rise to a disagreeable situation. Again, every habit is pursued with a dexterity of movement that matches

² Cf. Pt. III, Ch. 1.

in its results the operation of the supposed instinct. Let a man try to ply the hammer with the left hand when usage has taught him to grasp it with the right, and he will acknowledge the sovereign authority of habit. Still again, habit does not wait to be told to act, but acts as if by native right. Finally, there is independence of attention, and it is this which gives habit its influential place in human life. The virtuoso who elicits celestial melodies from the strings of his Stradivarius pays no heed to the notes on the page or his fingers on the instrument; he is lost in the contemplation of his theme.

But here the parallel between instinct and habit is at an end. No man may question the intrinsic power of an instinct, but anyone with true insight may ask whether the substance of a given habit is sound. Thus, a certain reader has contracted the habit of never finishing a book. He peruses the first chapter, skips the next, roams through the remaining, and closes the volume without a clear conception of its contents. Behavior like this cannot be traced to an inherent tendency; it is not the result of some caprice of temperament. Laxness in reading is a derived habit, slowly but surely passing through the process of fixation, "while its motives and excitements," as Bishop Butler would say, "are continually less and less sensibly felt, even as the active habit strengthens."³ Let such a reader be brought abruptly to bay by an authorized critic—the teacher in a class, the judge on the bench, the official in the government—and he will at once understand that there is no escape from blame for permitting a perilous habit to proceed unchecked.

If habits possess the importance indicated by these properties, it is essential to determine just how they may be contracted. The genesis of habit may be voluntary or quasi-voluntary, but in either case it is always accompanied by attention. It is beyond the scope of this treatise to discuss the physiological aspects of habit, except to admit that the

³ "Analogy," Pt. I, Ch. 5. Quoted by Stout, "Analytic Psychology," Vol. I, p. 266.

processes of the nervous system provide a solid groundwork for the success of moral actions. We are interested solely in the ideal elements. The driving of a motor-car is a complicated example of the formation of habit. An entirely new set of mental coördinations must be instituted when one begins to learn the art. The driver's hand is upon the wheel, his foot is on the brake, his eyes are fastened on the road or the approaching car, his ear is attentive to the signal of the traffic officer, his whole body is in a state of tension comparable, perhaps, to the white-heat excitement with which a soldier enters his first military engagement. But the "plastic matter of the brain," as James would say, soon overcomes the hesitation and irregularity of movement. The novice settles down to his task; he accustoms his eye to the changing scene and his total mind to the unexpected behavior of his competitor. In short, he habituates himself to his new task by the stubbornest kind of attention. By attention, by repetition, by retention, the habits in behavior and thought are formed.

Much more difficult to handle is the second class of habits, where the volitional element is reduced to a minimum or seems to disappear altogether. Here great caution must be exercised in our judgment of the moral values at stake, inasmuch as moral principles were not consulted in their formation. In some instances it may be wise to refer the subject to the psychiatrist for examination; in others, a study of the moral implications may be advisable. Thus, it is true that many of the disabling habits of youth spring from the quasi-voluntary and hence unjudged acquiescence in a common impulse, perhaps by the process of imitation, perhaps by emotional surrender to a stronger mind. These include the excessive use of nicotine, the addiction to vulgar language, the disregard of the canons of veracity, and the abusive treatment of the body. No symptoms of pathology ordinarily appear in these examples. They belong to the behavior of a normal youth who has been inadvertently led into a misuse of his inherent powers.

A subtler form of habitual response has been detected by

modern investigators of psychical phenomena. They call it repression or the repressed complex—the tendency to disregard any desire which has hitherto brought dissatisfaction or positive pain to the desiring consciousness. To quote from Dr. Gordon's treatise on "Personality:"

The subject, so to speak, turns his back on this trait in his character or experience of his environment and refuses to recognize that it is there and by means of the process of repression actually ceases to believe in its existence.⁴

Under such conditions the active decisions are severely limited, since they must forever fight against the effort of the subdued desire to escape from its bondage. The negative self-feeling made prominent by McDougall seems to partake of the same sense of restriction. The portrait of Uriah Heep shows how the principle of repression may be designedly used for sinister ends, leading us to ask whether the "complex" is not in reality a self-imposed mask rather than a constituent factor of character. Compare this state of mind with that of the boy who from his infancy has been told that he never does anything right—that his behavior is tangential, unconformed to the direction of the moral curve—and we get a true example of mental repression which has in it tragic consequences both for the boy and his associates.

These two types of habitual reaction—voluntary and quasi-voluntary—are submitted for examination and appraisal. The second type has received a technical treatment at the hands of the Freudian school. They propose to appraise all complexes as unsatisfied desires, desires that have been unable to obtain a place in objective behavior because the right environment was lacking. Repression of desires, they argue, is always accompanied by disturbing physical effects, sometimes as extreme as paralysis of muscles and organs. It is therefore the duty of the subject (or his attendants) to divert the force of the suppressed

⁴ R. G. Gordon, "Personality," p. 142.

desires into appropriate channels. This process is called "sublimation," and it is candidly expected that the self-centered mind will assume a more highly socialized form of expression. At all events, the principle we are bidden to follow is not unfamiliar to the average man, as is proven by an abundance of illustrations. Thus, the habit of collecting things of value (to the subject) will satisfy the repressed temper of acquisition. On a more massive scale the "moral equivalents of war," to use James's familiar phrase, will sublimate the lust for conflict and turn the mind into a quest of the arts and practices of peace. We are thus assured that the habits of a lifetime may be changed under the stimulus of a new idea, a present vivid feeling, without regard to any understanding of the maxims governing the motives and contents of conduct. Contrasted with this conclusion is the opinion of scientific observers that no progress can be made in the study of conduct until we have analyzed the element of control. Habit, we said, consists of attention and repetition; how shall they be secured? The problem of the Will awaits solution.

2. Control and the Determination of Will.

(a) We assent to the Aristotelian formula that habit is the natural medium of moral purpose. Habit is the second phase of all intelligent behavior; it crystallizes the essential desires in coherent and steady modes of action. But are all habits endowed with moral quality? Plainly, the quasi-volitional are not, since in them the mind is not aware either of a prescribed end or an intended effort to pursue it. Hence, the next step in the analysis calls for a principle of initiation which is different in terms from bare conation or instinct. For us, volition means the acceptance of a type of desire in accord with the established character of the agent. Will is not an independent energy superimposed upon the system of desires and arbitrarily controlling their operation; such a theory belongs to the age when heat was a caloric introduced into the body from without or when

light was a separate force of nature, the single property of ethereal substance. If desire is the source of every habit, then will is desire at work in the fulfillment of its respective ends.

How does will become sponsor for potential desire? The desiderative end, in morals, is a reflective idea which is recognized as a fact in consciousness at the exact moment of attention, although its meaning will be apprehended only when the end is converted into action. It is instructive to follow the fortunes of a typical desire. Courage is universally regarded as a constituent virtue in conduct. It is not, however, a property created and molded by moral motives. Primarily, courage is a native impulse, variously described as daring, abandon, sheer disregard of physical danger. None of these qualities has intrinsic moral value; they are terms in psychology as valid for animal behavior as for human. How does daring change into courage?

The process is twofold. First we must understand the nature of the action. Aristotle flatly announces that the substance of conduct is "determined by the rule of right reason."⁵ Thus we may examine the concept of courage as it appears in the career of a distinguished soldier like Leonidas, the hero of Thermopylæ. It begins in the craving of youth for distinction in the arts of war. Courage is frequently learned by imitation, the urge to repeat a valorous deed observed in another. So far, it is in its pre-moral stage. Courage assumes its moral complexion when specific dangers, especially the threat of death, confront the agent and force him to analyze its meaning. It becomes moral if and when it pursues a rational end. Right reason dictates the terms of decision. Then the second element in the process emerges. The decision arrived at involves the execution of its own terms. Here, as already pointed out, the judgments of morality differ from the judgments of logic. Courage is now the animated will in its challenge to fear. The pre-moral discipline of military service prepared Leonidas for

⁵ "Ethics," Bk. III, Ch. 8.

the ordeal of battle. His independent resolution, backed by a knowledge of the solid grounds upon which the call to action rested, enabled him to meet the attacks of the foreign foe and accept death rather than surrender. Courage may not be reduced to the exactness of a chemical formula, but it acts with direct and effective force.

We may then agree upon a general maxim: *Every moral habit begins its course by a conscious and deliberate affirmation of an idea which embodies the essential purposes of the reigning desire.*

(b) But habit is not a single sequestered act; it is a series of acts characterized by the same desiderative quality. If the first member of the habit-series demands scrutiny, equally imperative is it for us to determine carefully each new step in its unfolding. The tragic failures of moral endeavor bear witness to the weakening of control. Wolsey may lament the relaxing of the volitional tension that permitted him to sacrifice the principle of spiritual fidelity in order to gratify a public ambition. Yet a momentary indecision, though fatal to objective hopes, is not necessarily the harbinger of moral decline. Much more serious is the steady rejection of moral values by men who put selfish gains before noble ends and revolt from none of the monstrous acts that follow from the choice. Shelley has analyzed the character of the Cenci with a master hand. The Count has been from his "dark and fiery youth" a man of "desperate and remorseless temper." He has murdered his enemies times without number and bought expiation from the Pope and "respite from hell" by enrichment of the Church. In a "dishonored age" he has been charged with a "thousand unrepentant crimes," and he sinks to the lowest depths in attempting to seduce his own daughter. The lust of cruelty has slowly developed in his breast; it has become a fixed idea, an insatiable passion, a tyrannous demon.

The mood has grown upon me, until now
Any design my captious fancy makes
The picture of its wish—and it forms none

But such as men like you would start to know—
Is as my natural food, and rest debarred
Until it be accomplished.

If habit grows by what it feeds on, then a habit gorged by the blood of one's kind reflects the irremediable malevolence of a human brute that excites nothing but repugnance and contempt in the minds of observers. We turn away from the scene profoundly disheartened. Can morality prescribe a rule by which defeat as complete as this might have been avoided? Many habits, like most desires, are formed long before the distinctions of right and wrong are discovered. Society is thus under the greatest obligation to provide the proper moral *milieu* for its children. Habits of industry and thrift are often the outcome of early training; perverse habits like thieving may be imposed before the mind has left its plastic state. Yet whether involuntary or deliberately chosen, habit is not a sequestered action but a chain of causes that binds the subject to a specific type of thought and behavior. It is therefore incumbent on the moral mind to assert its rights in the choice of ends and the modes of realizing them. Cruelty and cowardice cannot remain unchallenged in a moralized society. Habits that exhibit such lapses from normal equilibrium must show cause why they should continue to exist. If framed before the age of discretion, individual will or public coercion must rid them of their sinister force. This is what we mean by the control of desire. Let us study it further.

3. Control Is Decision Between Desires.

We have thus far interpreted will as stamping the meaning of desire on a new or persisting habit. This is only one of its functions; it has two others equally important—the deliberate selection of a desire and the decision to break an established habit-series.

(a) The choice of a satisfactory moral end is the severest test to which human judgment is subjected. The plain man

who reflects on his action quickly notes that desires conflict and ends as proposed develop contradictory qualities. He also observes that, while the immediate end may be good, the means to attain it vary in moral importance. Thus, the question of honesty is continually before the average mind. Even the case-hardened tradesman knows the meaning of the sudden jerk in feeling when he decides against the commonly accepted canon. The respect for reputation and the expectation of pecuniary gain, the conception of the rights of one's neighbor as understood by the more serious intelligences, make for desires obviously in conflict with the situation before us.⁶ All of them cannot survive; one must be chosen. The problem centers in the specific question: What connection does will sustain with desire? Three solutions have been suggested; we shall discuss each in turn.

The first (i) solution states that all desires may at one time or another be found in competition, and the decision as to which shall be gratified will depend on the positive strength of the winning number. Suppose, in the case just cited, that the contest narrowed down to the desire for repute and the craving for the money increment. Each of these has its normal influence in social transactions and each has also its differential appeal. At the same time, the influence of reputation under certain conditions, as, for example, the seeking for public office in a community where moral standards are fairly high, would gain immeasurably in weight and conciseness and, as a motive to action, would become extremely powerful. The contest, therefore, has to do with the strength of the competing desires; or, as Bain says, "The conflict is between me and myself—between (for instance) me desiring pleasure and me dreading self-reproach."⁷ Love of money and fear of inner disturbance resulting from loss of social respect are in contradiction.

Is the theory successful? Does it account for experience as we know it? The difficulty lies in the fact that it separates desires into independent states of mind contending for the

⁶ Cf. Pt. IV, Ch. 3.

⁷ Bain, "Emotions and Will," Ch. 6.

mastery. They are like self-determining pieces on the chess-board, constantly maneuvering for position. Especially is this true when we are confronted by wholly dissimilar impulses which must follow courses of action suited to their respective needs. The desire that triumphs can be nothing but the settled attitude of mind expressed in a new kind of action.

The second (ii) solution consists in distinguishing will from all desires and giving to will the right to select the desire which is to win immediate application in conduct. This theory has been widely held, and by men of the first importance, for example, Descartes and Kant. The structure of the problem is now changed. Desires for the most part are of equal value, and the choice is made on the basis of the requirements of the moral agent. We are no longer in an official arena where individual contestants strive for victory, but in the court of law where their respective claims are weighed and settled by the presiding judge. The problem of choice is perplexing enough under the most favorable circumstances; it becomes appallingly difficult when I as the judge must, like a disinterested spectator, stand apart from my own desires and make decision. Let the simple problem be this: Shall I tell all I know about the political scandal and thus risk the loss of the next election for my party, or shall I keep the details in the depth of my mind, hidden from the eyes of all, on the assumption that exposure of the facts cannot rectify the wrongs already suffered and may do infinite hurt to innocent persons? I must choose between the two. If my will is detached from all desire, there would seem to be little trouble in securing action. But experience does not bear out this hope. I say I cannot decide.⁸ Then what shall be done? Shall I merely drift with the current and let events bring me up to the proper harbor? Shall I toss up a coin in my mind and accept the verdict with complacency? Or shall I make a supreme effort, identify my will with either proposal, it matters not which, and

⁸ Cf. James, "Principles of Psychology," II, 531.

see the issue through to its end? There is one further possible attitude, the attitude of the strong-minded man, who pushes forward with no regard for directing aim or the nature of results but with confidence in his ability to act. We may find examples of these types in every group, in every race. The will is the nidus of power; desire is its acknowledged servant.

The third (iii) solution argues that will is the acceptance of the desire which represents most fully at the moment the average way of acting. This is the one theory which explains the function of habit as we have developed its meaning. If this theory be true, does the mind possess the power of contrary choice? That is to say, can we fasten our attention on a form of conduct opposed to our established character and deliberately will to adopt it? If will be identical with desire, and desire a necessary factor in character, how can contradictory moral traits issue from the same source? This objection has been frequently raised against the interpretation of will just laid down. The rejoinder has been made by Spinoza.⁹ There are many currents of moral action sunk deep in the subterranean channels of psychic behavior. Some of these currents have never yet come to the surface, and hence are unknown to the subject or his observer. From them are derived the tendencies which are directly contrary to customary habits. We are not responsible for the operation of the undetermined parts of the subconscious mind, but we are responsible for failing to construct admonitory checks by which dishonest thoughts should be effectually suppressed the moment they appear in consciousness. Here, habit is broken by strictly natural means; it must be restored by the stern mandate of an instructed will.

(b) If the habitual order can be changed by the eruption of an unsuspected tendency, it may be similarly affected by the exertions of the practical will. We have already pointed out the reflective element in every desire; it grows more

⁹ Cf. my "Freedom and Purpose," p. 61.

distinct as desire is translated into action. Many thinkers have attempted to separate judgment from desire. Hume, for instance, holds that all moral discriminations arise from the sentiments of the mind, never from the pure representations of reason. Yet he admits that reflection is needed to "pave the way for such a sentiment and give proper discernment of its object."¹⁰ The speculative and practical uses of reason must therefore be distinguished. Thus, the electoral franchise presents a problem of major consequence in a democratic society. The specialist is bound to examine its terms, but he may never have occasion to apply them, if, for example, he lives in a Fascist state. He will study objectively the system of control, the relative distribution of powers, the rights of the governed and the duties of the governors. These are matters of theory and do not touch the nerve of political ethics. The specification of and response to civic obligations lie in an entirely different sphere. In fact, I may even debate the hypothetical question as to what would happen in case I decided to exercise my right of suffrage—still without giving an ounce of impetus to my will. I merely hold the subject before my mind as I should any problem in æsthetics or applied science.

Shall we say, then, that moral volition stands in no need of reflective thought? May we act upon the feelings of the moment, convinced that action thus enforced will obtain sufficient moral value to make its terms successful? Sentiment is essential to moral behavior, as we shall argue in the next chapter, but only after "nice distinctions have been made, just conclusions drawn, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained" (Hume). The duty of voting is not exhausted by placing the ballot within the polling box. This act may be done from the impulse of imitation, from fear of party discipline, from desire to defeat the opposing candidate, even from sheer conformity to statute, as in Argentina. But such incentives are emotional; they do not go down to the basal principles

¹⁰ "Inquiry," Sec. 137. Selby-Bigge edition.

on which democracy rests. The exercise of the elective franchise in the light of its intrinsic meaning is a sure index to our understanding of the relation between reflective thought and executive action. It demands an attitude different from that taken by the scientific student of government; it implies that we have discovered the fundamental duty of the citizen to the state, an obligation which, when discovered, he cannot decline to discharge.

But how does the matter stand when a traditional habit-series is broken by free election of will? Since every man is obliged to deal with countless series that were not consciously inaugurated by him, the problem of rupture assumes very grave proportions. No habitual mode of thought or activity may be lightly interrupted. Whim and caprice have no rights in the premises. Change must be arrived at after a calculating analysis of existing conditions, to discover whether they express adequately the purposes of the moral career and whether they can meet the demands of scientific knowledge or social development. Here the stoutest form of control is exhibited. Here the individual will comes abruptly in conflict with adjacent opinion. The struggle is formidable; it may be a battle of Titans. But will can triumph only if it be rightly and thoroughly instructed. An educated will is the strongest force in any community; it meets and overwhelms the most vigorous natural conations. Sentiment as expressed in choice may prevail for a time, but in moral crises a stern decision, grounded in logic and the methods of science, must eventually dominate the social scene.

Such a decision found embodiment in Plato's challenge to the materialists of his day, boasting of the inherent power of the atom and the validity of the quantitative division of nature; it came to flower in Dante's rejection of the oligarchic pretensions of the Donati family and in his assertion of the rights of private judgment; it was vehemently expounded in Luther's protestations at the Diet of Worms: "Here I stand; I can do no other: God help me;" it lifted the soul of John Hampden above the servilities of

a corrupt court, stimulating him to deny the legal rightness of the ship-tax and to refuse to pay it. These are historical proofs that a habit-series welded of old by tradition may be deliberately sundered by the practical will of man, which incorporates in its decisions the results of careful meditation.

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CHAPTER VI

EMOTIONAL CONTENT

In a realistic ethics such as we are expounding, emotion is to be accepted as a substantial fact of experience. For purposes of general description, our treatment of the subject will differ in no respect from that of the writer of drama or romance. Thus, Achilles stands squarely before us as a master of the technique of arms and at the same time a character endowed with common human tendencies. Impelled by the temper of revenge, he withdraws abruptly from the field of battle, lodging a sharp complaint against Agamemnon, who had robbed him of his prize. The state of mind engendered embraces those persuasions to action which we ordinarily call emotions. We shall not attempt to settle the dispute which has raged within the borders of psychology for over a generation. Is emotion an independent act of consciousness which awakes response in the efferent nerve centers and issues at length in visible bodily behavior? Or, as James maintained, is it inseparably connected with physical changes, whether seen or unseen, and therefore identical with them? The Hellenic chief was unaware of the contradictory assumptions men might adduce to explain his attitude. What he knew was that the overlord had spoken and he must obey, but in his obedience wounded pride and vengeful feeling came to emphatic utterance.

The complex of emotion being taken as a determinable fact in behavior, it remains for us to state the particular problems which ethics must study and proceed to offer a solution.

1. Place of Emotion in Moral Experience.

The prime factor in the problem is the relation of emotion

to the other properties already presented in the preceding chapters. Every mental act, we said, is characterized by three constituent properties—the desire which prompts it, the end which it embodies in the form of ideas, and the feeling-tone or organic registration of its value. The emotional content seems to have direct kinship with the third, but it is none the less significant in determining the meaning of the first two. Let us take them in order.

(a) The endeavor of mind to express its power is always accompanied by an emotional stress in sympathetic accord with the particular impulse. Thus, the desire for possession has as its steady correlative the animating temper of ambition. The “coarser” emotions,¹ such as fear and anger, are intimately associated with the instincts of self-defense and pugnacity. The spirit of play melts into the noble urge to æsthetic creation, bathing its subject in the warm glow of harmony and beauty. The will to act and its corresponding feeling go hand in hand. Bishop Butler has written the classical analysis of the emotion which lay at the root of Achilles’ withdrawal.² We call it revenge. But revenge is a derived sentiment, not an original tendency. Primarily, it is a quick, unpremeditated reaction to the experience of pain. Even if the scene which excites response be merely a presentation on an artificial stage, the disturbance of mind is still not feigned but real. If the transaction is effected on the platform of life, that is, “if we know both the person who did and who suffered the injury,” especially if we ourselves are personally involved, the passion of resentment would be of the same psychological quality; but in moral tension it would bear the imprint of definitive wrong, and revenge would be its official name. It is thus that Achilles met the affront of his chief, the impulse to fight for his rights being reënforced by the powerful emotion which divides with affection the entire area of human feeling.

(b) In the second place, the idea or end of desire charges its particular emotion with its own private content. We have

¹ James, “Principles of Psychology,” II, 467.

² “Sermons,” VIII. The passages quoted are from this sermon.

already shown that desire registers the movement of the constitutional powers of man in a given direction. The desire for food implies his ability to promote the primary end of life, namely, its preservation. The desire for knowledge suggests the application of the principle of acquisition within a limited sphere of inquiry. The desire for requital gathers in its embrace the fortunes of another person or persons and hence may bring about serious consequences. Butler finds that the feeling attaching to this desire has but one focus—self-defense.³ Resentment may be strictly natural, a revolt against the hurt or loss incurred in the normal order of events. Thus, if Achilles had been deprived of his trophy through the agency of storm or battle, his impetuous temper might still have caused him to rail at his untimely fate, since men often charge nature with heartless discriminations. Such reactions seem to be spontaneous expressions of defense; they have no moral quality. If, however, the demand for requital arises from a conviction that an injury has been deliberately and maliciously committed, resentment is no longer merely an animal passion but indignation against wrong, the wrong implying an invasion of the rights of personality. Justice in law and morals supports the claim. Homer has written a new chapter in the psychology of moral emotion. Achilles suffered under the sting of unrequited injury—an attack upon his personal honor. Resentment as an organic reaction is too elementary a term to describe his emotions. He chooses the type of revenge which augurs ill for the perpetrator of the wrong. We may or may not agree with Butler in holding that this powerful sentiment is a “demonstration that the rules of justice and equity are to be the guide of action,” but we cannot deny that the object of every desire carries with it a body of feeling that defines precisely the meaning of the given end.

The sign of moral maturity, then, is the passage from simple emotion to complex sentiment. Aristotle shows how feeling develops in æsthetic appreciation.⁴ The spectator in

³ “Sermons,” VIII. The entire sermon should be studied.

⁴ “Poetics,” Butcher’s translation, Sec. 6.

the Greek theater identifies himself with the fortunes of the hero or heroine. The tragic career of Antigone is not a mere dramatic recital; it is, to the observer, the experience of a being of flesh and blood. He feels with her the rectitude of her rebellion against the king. The laws of nature make null and void the vindictive decision of the monarch. He sympathizes with her avowal of guilt and her stoical acceptance of punishment, immurement in the tomb, and voluntary death. In moments of greatest tension he bursts into tears, purging his soul, as the critic says, of its heavy burden of emotion.

The experience belongs to a type; it affirms that deep moral feeling attends the contemplation of the changes in human fortune. No issue is settled by the bare determination of intellect, none by the stern operation of will. Passionless morality is a figment of the imagination. Even Kant admits that "frequent practice can at last produce subjectively a feeling of satisfaction;" therefore "it is a duty to establish and cultivate this, which alone deserves to be called properly the moral feeling."⁵ At the same time, he also insists that the idea of duty cannot be derived from the contents of feeling, for example, loyalty or revenge or ambition, because that would require us to entertain a "feeling for the law as such," thus transferring to the emotional stress what belongs only to the power of reason. But Kant's analysis of consciousness is faulty. He fails to note that every moral act is to be judged from three viewpoints, desire, end, and feeling; and that none of these, certainly not feeling, can be omitted from our appraisal of the moral value of the act.

(c) The third aspect of desire is the feeling-tones which accompany their execution. They are two in number, pleasant and unpleasant, or, as some would have it, painful and free from pain. Since pleasure is reflected in the equilibrium of the body's behavior, we may agree that it is positive while pain is negative. It is customary to distinguish the sensational form of pain, like the prick of a pin, from the discom-

⁵ "Critique of Practical Reason," Abbott's translation, p. 129.

fort that has its origin in cerebral changes, like the depression felt upon the receipt of disagreeable news. It is no doubt true, as Professor Everett points out,⁶ that localized pain may be disregarded for the moment in face of some engrossing mental exhilaration; but since the same antithesis is also found in our experience with pleasure—the warm glow of anticipation being neutralized by the sudden disappointment to cherished hopes—there would seem to be no reason why we should not extend the meaning of the common terms to the entire range of active feelings.

Now the nature of the governing emotion is exhibited in the feeling-tone with which it is associated. Baldwin has called this the “sanction of desire.”⁷ The full meaning of desire can only be determined when we have considered the ultimate consequences of its execution. Theoretically every appetite is good and should therefore be followed by a pleasant tone, since it embodies the express purpose of the organism. It is necessary, however, to discriminate the end towards which desire looks from the means which are used to attain it. They are not the same, and the pleasure or pain experienced usually expresses the value of the latter, not of the former. To recur once more to Achilles: His primary desire was to preserve his place of equality among the leaders of the Greek crusade. This was momentarily identical with the preservation of his personal honor; it represented his interpretation of his own achievements in military skill and leadership. If the desire were fulfilled, he would secure a feeling of satisfaction; if it were thwarted, the opposite feeling. There were both lawful and unlawful means by which its execution might be frustrated. Let us suppose that he was found guilty of cruel and inhuman treatment of his slave and that public opinion demanded her release from his control. The judgment of reflection would have been that, while pain necessarily ensued, it was lawfully imposed, and a man of honor would accept its terms without reprisals. But the facts in the case under review are different. Aga-

⁶ “Moral Values,” p. 118, *et seq.*

⁷ “Social and Ethical Interpretations,” p. 372, *et seq.*

memnon deliberately seized the property of his associate as compensation for his own loss. The act cut directly into the moral dignity of a sovereign personality. It was not pain as an element in consciousness but the unjust instrument producing it that awoke Achilles' resentment. We may therefore formulate the following maxim: *The validity of desire as a moral motive is determined not by the presence of pleasure or pain consequent upon its fulfillment or nullification but by the kind of object that produces the particular feeling.*⁸

2. Types of Moral Emotion.

It is now apparent that experience cannot be fully understood except by a just appraisal of the feeling-values. We proceed to inquire what types of emotion have distinct moral reference. It seems incorrect to say that every emotional reaction may eventually obtain the character of virtue or vice. No one will dispute the claims of Ribot that feelings deepen into dominating passions when men set themselves to a disinterested pursuit of truth or beauty.⁹ Kepler, Spinoza, and the fameless Hungarian savant, Mentelli, approach almost to the limits of intellectual rapture, where moral values are without significance. On the other hand, no impartial critic will deny that the quest for truth and sensuous beauty has its computable influence on the habits of the agent and the public.¹⁰ Whenever a sound incentive to thought and action appears, it becomes *ipso facto* a true index to moral feeling.

In general, however, the definition of emotion in the field of conduct must be considerably narrowed. There are certain feeling-centers that will be automatically excluded from the list. Thus, wonder and awe do not conduce to the understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The wonder of Job in face of the portents of the heavens might easily excite that feeling of human abasement which pos-

⁸ This is fully discussed in Pt. II, Ch. 4.

⁹ "Psychology of the Emotions," Ch. 11.

¹⁰ Cf. Pt. IV, Ch. 7.

sesses a tincture of moral passion, but which directly can merely instill the sentiment of despair at ever reaching the sublime perfections embodied in nature or God. Likewise, a simpler feeling, such as curiosity, lends itself with difficulty to a change in moral behavior. An inquisitive temper may aid us in probing the efficacy of ethical methods; it never attains the right to say that we *ought* or *ought not* to accept its suggestions as endowed with moral authority.

What emotions, then, must we catalogue as essentially moral? Some authors have held that emotional differences depend on the action of the muscular system, flexor and extensor—that is, that hate and love, anger and respect, fear and confidence, are emotions which can and do have expression in the musculature of the body. These three pairs of feelings exhaust the entire emotional content. Fear and its counterpart are the original reactions, followed in chronological sequence by anger and hate. Hatred seems to be the expression of an adult consciousness, since it involves the capacity to entertain the idea of injury suffered, together with the planful endeavor to visit recompense upon the offender. Furthermore, time must intervene between the two factors of response, namely, the plan of revenge and its execution. It is therefore probable that in the last pair of feelings we are dealing solely with human behavior. Certainly no one can doubt that hatred is the veridical form that *sustained* fear and *spent* anger assume; and this condition presupposes the existence of a mind that can calculate chances and results. Taking the three pairs together, we may conclude that fear and anger and hate are negative in value, since each embodies a residuum of pain—an intimation that the natural functions have not been fully discharged. Their counterparts stand for the normal development of behavior, as is evidenced by the emotional career of youth. Confidence in the care of parents, respect for the will of the stronger, and a comprehensive interest in the movements of the group—these represent the original and positive expressions of feeling in the experience of the average man.

The value of this classification lies in the fact that it presents the emotional contradictories in a clear light. It obeys the principle which normative sciences in general follow, that the meaning of any set of concepts can best be determined by studying their direct opposites—right and wrong, true and false, beautiful and ugly. There is one serious difficulty, namely, that negative feelings may sometimes attain positive and constructive content. Thus, fear of civil injustice may lead a people to organize a rebellion for the safeguarding of their rights. In fact, actions which issue in pain are not necessarily contrary to moral law. Hence, anger when properly directed may become a strong force for justice in a highly moralized community. It is important to remember that all emotions begin their course as natural and spontaneous tendencies; they take on moral color with the growth of intelligence; their value appears first in the give-and-take of social intercourse; it assumes its final form in the subtle determinations of mind.

We shall therefore make the examination from another viewpoint. Accepting the three sets of feeling as the surest candidates for moral excellence, we may note that they, like desires, are first external and then internal; first observed in public behavior, then traced to their source in the decisions of the moral judgment. The two aspects are not always distinguishable. In some cases, like religious awe, the organic change, for instance, falling on one's knees, is simultaneous with the appearance of the spiritual ecstasy. In other cases the engrossments of an intellectual exercise are suddenly checked by an emotional agitation that compels the subject to discontinue his specific task. Sir Isaac Newton's experience is familiar to students of the history of science. In all cases the moral meaning of emotion is fixed, not by the intensity or duration of the nerve disturbance, but by the manner in which feeling interprets the fundamental principles of character. Hence, the ultimate test is made by the supervisory mind.

We shall first take the negative feelings. Like all emotions, they begin as simple reactions to environment. It is

not very long before the environment is narrowed to the type of individuality which the subject represents. Hence, fear and anger and certainly hate are directed against a human neighbor who by accident or design has interfered with our ordinary habits. The subsequent behavior enters the area of moral responsibility. We do not usually condemn a man for the organic rush of enraged feelings; that is natural and cannot be stayed. It would require the temper of a Stoic to forbid their arousal. What we do condemn is the absence of effort to stem the flood. We most emphatically condemn a man for undertaking immediate and unconsidered reprisals. Fundamentally, as Butler proved, an angry response is the behavioristic symbol of defense. The skilled moralist is ready to examine the extenuating circumstances—youth, inexperience, suddenness of attack. It is the cool, calculating form of anger expressed by stinging word or menacing movement that meets the stern reprobation of the critic. Under such conditions as these, the sense of disapproval is found to be a fixed fact in moral consciousness.

There is another side to the whole matter. Negative feeling may, we said, assume the complexion of a positive good. If the angry protest is excited by an iniquitous deed committed against the agent or his group, the moralist not only declines to issue a suitable reprimand but actually commends the act as worthy of the highest approbation. The hot indignation aroused throughout the civilized world in 1914 by the cynical violation of Belgian soil by a people which had sworn to guarantee it against invasion was esteemed a strictly moral feeling. Here the emotion passes from the external to the internal state. The liberties of a sovereign nation, faith in international justice, the rights of the weaker in contest with the stronger, convert the feeling from a mere casual social response to a glow of sentiment which bids fair to be crowned with homage by unborn ages as the symbol of intrepid moral courage.

The positive feelings pass through the same metamorphosis. Love is originally a binding force, nothing more. Its

tenacity depends on condition; it is not proof against rupture. Travelers in the heart of Africa report that at the approach of strangers of another race and color native women throw away their babes from sheer obedience to fear. The stronger feeling prevails. In the cultivated circles of Greece, the affection of husband and wife was grounded in the utilities of the case. In general, the call of blood is more convincing than the arbitrary conventions of society. Yet filial piety, signally commemorated in the person of Æneas, was rather the exception than the rule. "The current of affection," says Ribot, "is in proportion to the services rendered."¹¹ It is to a considerable extent by dint of hard moral discipline that feelings pass into active sentiments, as is seen in the rise of the medieval order of chivalry. The change is due to the slow refining of moral feeling, and especially to the birth of the principle of approbation. Approbation keeps step with the growth of sympathy, and sympathy, when reflectively apprehended, functions as the true policy of action.¹²

It should be remembered that every policy is at root the expressive embodiment of a central emotion. To approve a policy means to identify it with the inner sense of obligation, not to determine its logical validity. An intellectual discernment of what is good and right cannot oblige me to accept its terms as a moral mandate. "We see and approve the better, we follow the worse." But truth as logically determined is enforced by the principle of obligation which binds man to action through the internal sympathetic emotion. Kant, no doubt, is right when he insists that feelings in the lower ranges of experiences (for example, the insistence of custom or the persuasions of friendly interest) are invariably colored by the content of empirical desires. "Inclinations change, they grow with the indulgence shown them, and always leave behind a greater void than we had thought to fill."¹³ The deepest emotion of spirit is content-

¹¹ "Psychology of the Emotions," p. 281.

¹² Cf. Paton's use of the word *policy* in "The Good Will," Ch. 7.

¹³ "Critique of Practical Reason," trans. by Abbott, p. 214, *et seq.*

ment, which implies a "conscious mastery over inclinations." It also implies the right to judge the meaning of experience in terms of the supreme law of moral judgment—what I *ought* to know and do. Hence, the organization of all feelings is expressed in the harmonious sense of contentment.

3. Temperament and Moral Emotion.

So far we have discussed emotion as though all men were affected by it in precisely the same way. It is the verdict of experience, however, that human susceptibilities are of unequal strength. Observe the reactions of a cultured circle when one of its members is charged with sudden delinquency, for instance, a dishonest business transaction. Some are profoundly shocked at the betrayal of trust; others argue that "every man has his price," and that we can have no confidence in moral professions; still others belittle the gravity of the action, maintaining that the outcry is due to an unwarranted survival of the Puritan conscience in a scientific age. Whence comes the diversity of judgment? We answer, from the diversity of temperament and training. Hence, the practical problem in ethics is: How can a man convert his peculiar disposition into virtuous character? We shall study two types, both extreme, the pessimistic and the romantic.

Pessimism, we should remember, is a species of fear sometimes accentuated into hate. It considers the efforts of men to realize their destinies and finds them confronted with defeat and shame. Famine, disease and organic degeneration, economic servitude under which multitudes in civilized countries are forced to live, the imminence of war with its fears and pains, intellectual struggles with no rewards, the tyranny of intolerance, the flaunting assertion of mediocrity—the *Weltschmerz* that tried the soul of Werther—these constrain men to repeat the words of Leopardi, who himself, through impaired health, the repugnance of his home life, and his unsated desire for love and comradeship, knew their significance and their reach:

When memory of our dreams comes o'er me stealing,
There weighs on my heart a feeling
Bitter, disconsolate,
And I must e'en bewail my misery.
O Nature, Nature, why
Of all then promised give
Effect to nought hereafter? Why thy sons
So montrously deceive? ¹⁴

This state of mind is difficult to probe; yet it is real and not infrequent in occurrence. A pragmatic solution is of no avail; it merely makes the malady worse. The skill of a Pascal is needed to give the proper medicament.

Very different is the attitude of the romanticist—for instance, the artist whose home is the wide expanse of nature, not the dark caverns of private introspection. The pessimist recognizes the laws of morals but finds no easy way of getting them applied; the other acknowledges no moral sanctions except the rules of art. Men have a certain sympathy with the former, but no patience with the latter. *Æsthetic* intuition, however, cares nothing for the habitudes of social intercourse. Oscar Wilde, writing from the shadows of the Reading Gaol, relates in “*De Profundis*” the reasons for his choice. To moralize a temper like this seems hopeless. The critic has no point of contact here, as he has in dealing with pessimism. For the romantic mind, moral canons are as devoid of reality as the enchanted knight in the fabled cave of Montesinos. Both types of character give no response to the ordinary appeal of obligation; the one because no satisfactory results can come of it, the other because the appeal has no right to be made.

But temperament is only one element in the problem; the environment must also be examined. It is well known that family traditions, economic relations, education, political sanctions, are powerful instruments in training the emotional forces of mind. They will either strengthen native dispositions or check their operation. The course of Puritanism illustrates the latter case. It changed the merry

¹⁴ G. L. Bickersteth, “The Poems of Leopardi,” p. 259.

England of Shakespeare and Jonson, with its crowded theaters, its puppet shows, its gorgeous court masques, into the grave, rigorous Commonwealth of Cromwell. Rarely indeed has history recorded so remarkable an instance of emotional repression. Sharply opposed to this is the sentimentalism of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Feelings must have free play; reason is to be ignored. He rejected the stiff formalism of French life in court and bourgeois society. He despised the distorted methods of civil government. The state must be governed by the warm, curative forces of nature. Education, as he wrote in "Emile," must inculcate the rights of private, individualistic impulse. Small wonder that Dr. Johnson exclaimed: "I think him one of the worst of men, a rascal who ought to be hounded out of society as he has been. . . . Rousseau is a very bad man."¹⁵ When to native tastes and social training is added the strong attraction of a current philosophy, we may well ask whether the common rules of ethics can give an adequate solution to the problem. The one solution lies in the answer to the question: What does the principle of obligation mean to the average judgment of mankind?

4. Obligation and Moral Emotion.

The sense of obligation is a permanent and separate element in experience. J. S. Mill held that it arose from the sympathetic response which we make to the needs of other men; hence, while it is not innate, it is "not for that reason the less natural."¹⁶ Cudworth argued that it belongs to the original structure of the soul and thus has a capital place in the actions of mankind.¹⁷ The genesis of the feeling may be in doubt, but its unfailing presence in every experience forces us to study its implications. We may agree that such a feeling will be different from the ordinary emotional stress. When Kant uses the term "sense" in this connec-

¹⁵ Quoted by J. R. Lowell, "Among My Books," I, 352.

¹⁶ "Utilitarianism," Ch. 3.

¹⁷ "Immutable and Eternal Morality," Bk. I, Ch. 2.

tion, he understands it to mean the "theoretical force of perception." But, in any case, obligation involves a *strain towards action*. It is found in the simplest forms of appetite. Men do not debate whether they should take food, if in good health and hungry and unpressed by the claims of some superior duty to perform; they *take* it. We do not argue that we *ought* to draw a correct conclusion from the given premises; we follow the argument and expect to get the result. When, however, we form a judgment about a course of action, we are aware of a definite urge to perform it. The sense of obligation is keen and persistent; it has an authority that no other feeling possesses. It allies itself with a certain sort of constitutional emotion. Thus, envy, malice, and avarice are contrary to virtue and have no claim upon the drive to duty; hence, we cannot conceive of applying the sanctions of obligation to their content. Such feelings have no standing in the court of moral decisions.

We may phrase the governing maxim thus: *The sense of duty is the emphasis laid on a specific form of action which carries with it the realization of certain well-defined ends.*

There is a second part to the problem. Is the feeling of obligation the originating cause of all moral behavior? Shall we do our "duty for duty's sake"? Or is the sense of duty only another aspect of the judgment we have reached as to what our reasonable service is? Emotion, we said, is a necessary property of the three phases of every act—desire, substance of the desired end, and the resulting satisfactions. The endeavor to save a drowning man or to speak the truth before the civil court is accompanied with a glow of warmth that betokens our acceptance of its terms as valid. Yet it is not the simple feeling "I ought" which is in control, but the self embodied in the executive will. Likewise, obligation is related to the contents of the act, the intention which we have in mind. There may be a collision between my "sense of duty" and my immediate inclinations, but the sense of obligation must at length prevail at the moment when it fixes its energies upon the fundamental interests of human life. Behavior is not determined by the

mere expression of obligation—"duty for duty's sake"—nor by the contest of motives for the control of will. It is the choice of mind based upon the sustained habits of former endeavor and thought, which, with Aristotle, we may appropriately call *character*. Such a choice is in the long run approved by the basic emotions; we are content.

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CHAPTER VII

THE DETERMINING JUDGMENT

The elements of behavior already examined include the system of desires, the principle of control, and the emotional content of the individual act. We shall make no mistake if we regard desire as the nuclear point in all experience; we must therefore study its implications. Now, since desire looks to a variety of ends, and since a choice must be taken between ends if we are to avoid a devastating conflict, we might expect the mind to be furnished with some faculty which can meet the situation effectively. It is the custom to call this faculty the intellect, reason, conscience, judgment. The term is of little consequence, but the concept denoted by it is essential to the understanding of moral consciousness.

All ethical writers agree in accepting the reality of this function and its capital authority. Plato set it in opposition to the entire body of animal passions and assigned to it a regulative office. Aristotle assumed that human acts can be moral only if their course is deliberately determined by the presiding intellect in accordance with the established order of its thought. The severe criticism to which modern science has subjected the concept of mind has not succeeded in eliminating the fact of an elective and selecting coördination of effort in a single judgment. The sharp distinction which Kant continued to draw between the observable elements of experience and the unity of the Practical Reason has given way to the thesis that thought and desire are analytical aspects of consciousness, not separate units in its whole. The moral act is not divisible into two contradictory principles, which can be reconciled only by a kind of psychic miracle. The entire human self is involved in any endeavor

looking to the execution of a virtuous program. We proceed to indicate the relative status occupied by judgment in the scheme of human conduct.

1. Judgment—the Reflective Expression of Desire.

“The last opinion in search of the truth of past and future is called judgment,” says Thomas Hobbes in the “Leviathan,” one of the earliest systematic treatises on morals in the English tongue. Judgment is contrasted with will; as will springs from and completes appetite (desire), so judgment passes through opinion to a clear decision. The contrast is further emphasized by the assurance that desire and will belong directly to the animal nature of man, while judgment has its roots exclusively in the powers of intellect. Yet, while Hobbes treats judgment and desire at times as though they had their locus in different parts of consciousness, still, true to his British temper, he recognizes the closest practical connection between them. “The thoughts,” he says, “are to the desires as scouts and spies to range abroad and find the way to the things desired.” It is this relation which distinguishes man from the brute; “for the dog by custom [habit] understands the call of his master, but the understanding which is peculiar to man is the understanding not only of his will but of his conceptions and thoughts.”¹

What, then, is judgment? The term has been appropriated by the logic of the schools and is used to bind a predicate to its subject in a logical proposition; specifically, to show how the meaning of a concept is unfolded by defining its essential properties. Thus, “War is an acknowledged evil,” is a proposition that attempts to state those aspects of a conflict between nations which embody the physical, economic, and moral consequences, summing them up in a derogatory epithet as the accepted sentiment of mankind. A judgment thus framed is something more than a logical sentence; it has the ring of moral conviction and therefore should be carefully analyzed.

¹“Leviathan,” Ch. 7, 8, and 2, respectively.

(a) The first point to be determined is this: Can judgment ever be an immediate perception of external facts with no reference to ultimate values? Formal logicians deny it; many psychologists affirm it. Who is right? To judge, Hobbes said, is "to find the way to the things desired." What things are desired? Desire is associated with emotional stresses like pride, revenge, ambition, and anger; each of these, for the moment, becomes the man. If judgment deals with these, it must consider what they can and will do; it must see to it that their excesses are curbed and their energies turned into the proper channels. A simple response to stimulus gives feeling its chance to work an undue amount of injury—if its values be not discovered and critically appraised. The difference between a perceptual judgment and a moral judgment is extremely wide. The fascinated spectator of a modern battle, if he merely stands by and surveys the scene, cannot be said to exercise judgment. His mind, for the time, is a highly sensitized photographic plate registering faithfully the rapidly succeeding events as they appear to his eye. If any comment is made, it will probably take the form of a term in science or æsthetics or ethics, and then we are no longer in the realm of empirical perception. Hence, while observation and exact reproduction are both necessary to the evaluation of any moral problem, they merely state the terms of the situation. Judgment is something more than a bare statement of the problem.

(b) Furthermore, judgment cannot assume the guise of opinion. It must possess a degree of certainty that opinion can never acquire, since it refers to all instances whose conditions are equivalent. Now opinion is debarred from laying down a universal rule; it merely affirms that, so far as we are aware, the facts stated in the proposition hold good. We shall, however, run into a definite hazard if we assert without qualification that A is B. We might decide "to act as if A were B," following the suggestion of Professor Cook Wilson;² but the menace to logical validity and

² J. Cook Wilson, "Statement and Inference," I, 100, *et seq.*

moral honesty is so great as to force the responsible agent to adopt its terms only in the most critical emergency. Note how this applies to the argument in favor of war: "The decline of pugnacity marks in any nation a recession" (of political strength).⁸ The proposition contains both a tentative statement of fact and a reason for the prosecution of war. Statesmen and publicists have seized upon this type of argument in order to gain theoretical support for a projected campaign. "Blood-letting is needed once in every generation," was the slogan of a daring American admiral. These are private opinions, sometimes passing into considered beliefs. Neither can be substantiated by the tests of logic; for a deductive test must show that character depends on the exercise of the so-called manly virtues, while the inductive test must amass testimony from an overwhelming number of historic cases in verification of the claim. Greek thinkers rejected the evidence as wholly inconclusive. Opinion and belief, with varying degrees of certainty, are pitfalls for the unwary mind. They put the holder under most serious risks, especially in the domain of morals. The logical ground for failure is the absence of a universal truth as the basis.

(c) If judgment be neither perception nor belief, we may turn to the sole remaining alternative—decision. Formal logic tends to exclude the element of volition from its abstract relations. A relation is held to be a *simon-pure* intellectual principle: it does not involve assent; it requires acceptance. But the Stoic's program was different: it had a distinct and important place for will. In addition to the mind's acknowledgment of its sense data, assent is required for the judgments of abstract thought. The syllogism, says Aristotle, is built on the principle of a necessary conclusion. Such a conclusion can be obtained only from an accredited major premise and an intelligible middle term. The problem of will begins with the major premise. Does it meet the convictions of every man who will ever use the

⁸ N. Angell, "The Great Illusion," p. 218.

given syllogism? Obviously, the two propositions above cited contain contradictory implications. War cannot be an evil, implicit or acknowledged, if a considerable number of reliable thinkers consider it to be essential to a nation's security. The elaborate dialectic of Treitschke and Bernardi in justifying Germany's preparation for war reduces the first statement to an unproved opinion. This, however, does not destroy the value of the initial judgment. Logic has imbedded a universal idea in the judgment which the agent accepts *for the time*. The universal does not depend for its validity on the unanimous vote of the people; it is reached on the ground of sufficient evidence scrupulously collected and examined. Thus, no critical thinker can accept the intent of the statement, "War is an acknowledged evil," except after the canons of logic have been ruthlessly applied. Sentiment and private desire must be excluded; the influence of friend and foe swept aside. The judgment is my own; I have decided the case for myself, and must be prepared to meet the consequences without flinching.

But suppose the judgment should prove to be faulty; suppose, for instance, it could be demonstrated that war is not an unmixed evil; that, while there are many cruel and morally deteriorating factors in it, it is on the whole a salutary experience and withal an enlightened social institution. What then is the nature of the original proposition? Is it a judgment in the strict sense, that is, based on adequate reasons, or is it an undigested opinion accepted by a great multitude of people who look merely at the immediate suffering entailed and pay no heed to the ultimate purposes at stake? The query has far-reaching implications. It compels us to face a matter which ethics always approaches with anxious step. Is there any principle, any criterion, by which truth may be infallibly determined? The query is answered by Kant in his critique of formal knowledge: "A sufficient and at the same time general mark of truth cannot possibly be found."⁴ In the realm of moral action, the

⁴"Critique of Pure Reason," Muller's trans., p. 46. Quoted by Wilson in "Statement and Inference."

Practical Reason alone can legislate, and its law is extremely vague. It may be stated in these words: "So act that you may at once decide to demand the same action of others." The logic of reflection and conduct is identical. A judgment may prove to be false because it is propounded in a volatile mind which has no irresistible checks. Hence, when contributory facts are multiplied, the corresponding concepts undergo a change of meaning. Facts and revised ideas force into the foreground principles that, up to the moment, have remained in obscurity. A new decision is then reached and will stand until contradictory evidence is at hand. To assume that a revision of judgment will imperil the foundations of all character is equivalent to saying that the *status quo* of morality is fixed and must remain so; in short, that progress is an impossible concept in ethics. Such a deduction, however, is forbidden both by the history of human conduct and by the laws of thought.

2. Moral Judgment and the Intrinsic Value of Desires.

We have now constructed the framework of the practical judgment and are ready to consider its content. Two questions of grave import confront the moral agent and press for reply: What is the inherent value of the desires that seek embodiment in action? How shall the decision we arrive at be transferred to the habit-series? We attempt an answer to the first question in the present section.

It should not be forgotten that desires constitute the basis of conduct, and conduct is thus a part of the objective world. As natural appetites, desires are real for animals; and, as projected ends of conduct, they are real for men. If desires be excised from behavior, or if they be interpreted as arbitrary forms of behavior springing from the peculiar disposition of the subject, then the element of character has no place in the structure of experience, since character is but consolidated desire. If, on the contrary, desire be the driving force in every action, it must follow that the diversity of desires is not alone a categorical principle but a

literal event in experience. The point to be borne in mind is that every judgment respecting the value of a desiderative effort is a transcript, more or less exact, of the world we are obliged to observe. Thus, the economic formula "Competition is the life of trade" is a record of conditions existing between groups of men in the distribution of material goods. Intercourse by means of exchange is a recognized mode of social behavior. The accumulation of commodities and the limited demand for them generate a sharp conflict of interest, inciting men to adopt subtle methods for maneuvering their rivals into a more or less unfavorable position in the market. This process is called competition, and its operation is supposed to stimulate consumption of the given specialty. The formula is divisible into two parts, a recital of an economic situation and a value-judgment as to its influence on social relations. The latter asserts that competition is the "life," the vitalizing principle, the true and sufficient good, of all industry and commerce. Exception may be taken to this interpretation of the facts when considered in the light of the recent consolidation of financial interests. But the judgment as an attempt to relate experience directly to external events remains a clear and unmistakable exhibition of the mind's effort to organize all experience under a systematic order of values.⁵

The application of this principle in ethics may be best obtained by studying the types of action to which moral predicates are attached. These types are three in number. Acts are either good or bad or indifferent in quality, depending, for the most part, on their consequences. (i) In his celebrated analysis of the moral situation, Kant runs through the list of traditionally good qualities and rejects them one by one.⁶ Intellectual excellences such as quick apprehension or subtle penetration, attitudes of temperament like candor or reserve, even moral virtues like self-control or courage, certainly the goods of fortune—health, wealth, pleasure, repute—may readily change into instru-

⁵ Cf. Pt. I, Ch. 10.

⁶ "Metaphysic of Morals," Abbott's translation, p. 9, *et seq.*

ments of moral error. There is but one absolute good, says Kant, namely, the Good Will, the determination of conduct by the Practical Reason. But the solution which he proposes is vitiated by the underlying assumption that goodness of will belongs of right to the constitution of man, an assumption that neglects the relation of the human species to the lower organisms and disregards the presence of an evil will in the historic experience of the race. The word *absolute* must be dropped; it is illegitimately applied to actions that are limited by the powers of body and mind. In general, we may say that aim and result reflect immediately the dominant desires of the personality and that, consequently, the judgment which formulates their content and the act which embodies it in organic behavior will be termed *good*.⁷

Some acts are intrinsically good; are others (ii) actually bad? We have already admitted that emotions like envy, malice, and greed are destructive of moral thinking, because they do not serve the primary interest of human nature. Inevitably they are followed by shiftiness and exasperation in social intercourse. Thus, the envy of partisan spirit masquerading under the guise of ardent patriotism repudiates the wise and statesmanlike policy of the opposing leader, restraining a nation by surreptitious devices from entering a sympathetic rapprochement with the other governments of the world. Envy is expressed in a negative judgment, a judgment that forbids the performance of the corresponding virtuous act. Again, the perverted appetite of a Cenci would, if unchecked, change the relation of fatherhood into a status of bestial love, with all the physical woes and spiritual humiliations ensuing therefrom. Here the judgment "Personal purity is not desirable" is converted into a form of behavior that must eventually undermine the basic relations of society as well as the most sacred affections of the race.

The third (iii) type of value-judgment has no inherent properties, good or bad; hence, its ultimate moral quality

⁷ Cf. Pt. II, Ch. 8.

must be drawn from the nature of the results. The terms of the judgment carry us beyond the scope of intellectual reflection into the maelstrom of organic changes. The basis of judgment is strictly objective; it concerns the previous career of the agent and the observable actions of the group. Thus, the opinion of Aristotle, "Slavery is an institution ordained by nature for the public welfare," may be variously appraised.⁸ There is nothing in the constitution of the human mind to indicate what social status an individual must occupy. The child is physically helpless, hence, subordinate. In the relations of husband and wife there are some elements which may be construed as those of subserviency and which legal statute cannot alter. Other relations are determined according to convenience. On rudimentary levels, slavery was necessary to social control. In the Periclean Age, the same institution allowed to men of refined intelligence leisure for the pursuit of art and scholarship. After long intervals of time, the principle of personality was recognized as the basis and guaranty of freedom. The practical judgment thus proceeds from complete approval to substantial disapproval of the system, depending in every case upon the philosophical tendencies at work.

From the train of thought we have just followed, it is obvious that judgment is an objective factor in experience, expressed now in internal aims, now in overt demeanor. Our next question is: What constitutes a moral judgment, in the technical sense? What specific predicate must it possess in order to be distinguished from judgments of taste and of logical validity? There is one predicate which is peculiar to itself. The moral intelligence alone is qualified to call an idea *right*, and to declare that the idea should be translated into action. Thus, we never say it is right to draw such-and-such a conclusion in logic, or it is wrong to withhold the attribute of beauty from a painting like Raphael's "Sistine Madonna." We certainly do not imply that some

⁸ Cf. "Politics," Bk. I, Ch. 2.

action might be taken to make either judgment effective. But the practical judgment moves on a different plane. It not only sets forth in predicative form the intrinsic values of conduct; it insists that every value should become an imperative to action. For this reason a competent thinker has no hesitation in converting the sentence, "Slavery is an invasion of the rights of personality," into an obligatory maxim, "Slavery is a moral wrong which should be redressed." In other words, the principle of right has in view the inherent capacities of the agent and the degree of their development at a particular moment. Hence, it appears as a predicate only in the judgment of control. The significance of the principle will be the subject of further discourses in later chapters.

3. Moral Judgment Demands Execution of Its Terms.

The problem which faces us may be stated in these words: What desires in operation at the moment should cause us to embody in the predicate the idea of "ought"? Every desire is, by definition, a law of behavior; but not every desire may be invested with the authority of an imperative in the given situation. (i) It has been suggested that no desire should be pursued which we cannot call upon other men to accept as a rule of conduct. If we should follow the impulse to deceive our neighbor and ask whether it could be made a universal principle of conduct, we discover, says Kant, that the very meaning of the term veracity is then destroyed, together with the relation of confidence between persons and groups. It would seem, however, that the same conclusion could be reached by a logical analysis without willing the act to be general in its force. (ii) Nor may we change the setting and say, with a recent writer,⁹ that the practical predicate should be "coherent with all good willing wheresoever it may be manifested." The artist seeks to render his creation—painting, statue, poem—coher-

⁹ H. J. Paton, "The Good Will," p. 360.

ent with beauty, although he is content to keep the coherence "within the individual work of art." The moral agent, on the other hand, must respect the judgments of other self-discriminating agents. With this opinion we may readily agree. But the crux of the difficulty is reached when we inquire into the meaning of *coherence*. As a guide to moral action, it loses its force if we cannot clearly define the body of laws which govern the "activity of the conscious whole." Otherwise, with what shall the action be made coherent? With "universal goodness"? Mr. Paton's moral judgment is a maze of generalities; it offers no peg upon which the principle of moral behavior may be hung.

Very different (iii) is the case with the realistic principle we are defending. Desire is the necessary vehicle of moral consciousness. We can explain by empirical events how the judgment of right is formed, especially how it conforms to the supreme rational purposes of man's nature, those embraced in what we have called the "interior ends." To recur to our example: Slavery is adjudged wrong by the sensitive mind because it renders abortive the steady unfolding of intellectual powers and moral feelings. The bondservant is under the power of a dominating master; his desires rest not in himself but in another; he has no initiating force of his own; he, a spiritual being, is a shuttle played to and fro by an alien hand. Independence, the first property of all morality, is absent from his mind. Only when he recovers and asserts authority over his own behavior can he be said to be strictly moral. Generalizing on this theme, we may say that only the agent who deliberately and continuously controls his competing desires is in a position to judge whether or not his conduct is right.

Moral control, we have assumed, always expresses itself in the form of an *ought*. This is the second aspect of the practical judgment. It is incumbent on the student of ethics to analyze the meaning of the central concept. Two elements are at once brought to light: (a) a commanding end or interest by which all desires are tested, and (b) the rational means by which the end is to be attained.

(a) It was an axiom with Aristotle that the "intellect by itself has no motive power."¹⁰ It is likely that he had in mind the familiar contention of the Socratic school that virtue is a kind of knowledge. If scientific acquaintance with the needs of human nature and with the means of supplying such needs be the sole source of virtuous conduct, few men could ever be released from the toils of unregulated appetite or ushered into the domain of moral ideals. The tragic facts speak for themselves. Hence, he distinguished between an intellectual and a practical judgment and invested the latter with the instruments of control. In the main, his argument is correct. Desire as a natural integer of behavior seeks for a common principle of conduct, some prescriptive idea, some directing purpose, which is also a real and independent fact of consciousness. The words of Sidgwick on this point are convincing: "The adoption of an end as paramount—either absolutely or within certain limits—is quite a distinct psychical phenomenon from desire."¹¹ The Realistic philosophy has no reluctance in accepting the distinction. Ideas are not merely names for mental processes; they cannot be epiphenomenal judgments passed by us upon our cerebral behavior, since the judgment thus passed is itself an idea, and therefore a separate fact of consciousness. Ideas should be accorded the same treatment that naturalistic psychology gives to the organic functions of body-mind. In contrast with purely speculative ideas, the idea of a moral end obtains a peculiar position of privilege because it looks to ultimate expression in the musculature of the body. It is the definition of the "paramount" end that gives the original urge to the natural will.

What is the substance of the "end"? The matter will be treated at length in the second part of this book. We shall here indicate the line of thought we propose to follow, after citing the competing theories of ethics. (i) The end has been defined as the summation of all the feeling-values that a

¹⁰ "Ethics," Bk. VI, Ch. 2.

¹¹ "Methods of Ethics," 6th ed., p. 37.

body such as ours derives from the satisfaction of its desires. Pleasure or happiness is the sure criterion of moral achievement. (ii) Since men dwell in compact communities and since their intellectual status is determined to a great extent by the several kinds of intercourse that organic behavior permits, it is essential that the pleasurable well-being of the body politic should be accepted as the sole object of moral effort. (iii) The end must be completely severed from the bundle of affections and desires and centered in the single self-sufficient and sovereign power called reason. Reason bears in its bosom an eternal and immutable principle, which, in a moral judgment, takes the form of duty. The primitive and unchanging end of life is obedience to its command. (iv) Since, however, some thinkers have been unable to detect a clear image of the principle in every race, they have altered its terms and prescribed the wholeness or perfection of selfhood as the true issue of moral endeavor. Self-realization is the inescapable goal of conduct. Between these extremes, many provisional ends have been set up. It remains for modern Realism to combine the salient features of each in a revised statement of Bishop Butler's argument. Human nature is based upon *interests*, the original and necessary forms of moral action in the pursuit of which men will obtain a sound and balanced character. This is the first note in the judgment of obligation.

(b) The end being prescribed, the means for its execution must next be determined. We hold the end to be a real and observable fact in experience, introspectively discerned for the most part, but none the less describable by the usual categorical relations. The means which lead to the end, the marks of behavior which enshrine the beauty and coerciveness of the ideal, are open to the view of all. They are (i) on the one side negative; they relate what will happen to the moral agent who fails to comply with the terms of his ideal. Sanction is explicit; it is mandatory; it has teeth! Pain of body, penalty of law, the averted face of an associate, the stern denunciations of religion, are the effective goads to conformity. As if these were not enough, nature has im-

planted in the soul the barbed fangs of remorse, feelings revealed in the livid face, the trembling hands, the unsteady limbs. We deal, not with speculative or hypothetical situations, but with the events of everyday experience. (ii) The pressure is also positive. It is embodied in my private conception of a will that can act in accordance with the purport of the judgment. It is echoed in the convictions of other men endowed with the same emotions, desires, and interests. The historic figures of moral strength and fortitude exert a profound appeal on the imagination and stir men to like virtuous achievements. The means of realizing the end vary with the social type and from age to age, but they register the same fervent endeavor to reach the goal.

Why, then, does the execution tarry? If the judgment is formally predicated, must not the predicating mind convert its thought into practice? We shall find instructive suggestions in Aristotle's treatment of the practical judgment.¹² The major premise is a universal idea: "All excess is evil and should be avoided." The minor premise, however, "His conduct, for example, anger, intoxication, licentiousness, is a case of excess," belongs to the region of organic experience, the seat of natural appetite, and hence outside the bounds of reflective judgment. Can and will the just conclusion be drawn, "He should avoid the excess"? It is not uncommon for men to admit the truth of the first premise but decline to apply the warning. It is even possible to admit the truth of the first clause of the major premise but deny the validity of the second. All excess is, indeed, evil; but may not I be an exception to the rule, because my conditions are essentially different? Furthermore, does not nature have certain compensations by which the moral balance is redressed? The point is—logically speaking—that the two premises stand on unequal levels and can be combined only with the greatest difficulty. "Intellect by itself has no motive power." The conclusion of an ordinary syllogism contains no energy great enough to force the will to action.

¹² "Ethics," Bk. VII, Ch. 3.

Once let men appreciate the supreme interests of their nature, once let them understand the means by which obligation is converted into deed, then the relation of the two premises in the practical judgment grows clear. Intelligence and will are united.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE MORAL SELF

We have had many occasions in the foregoing discussions to employ the term "the moral self." The time has come to make a somewhat detailed examination of its contents. We may assume at the outset that all schools of philosophy, not to say all programs of psychology, make room for the elementary meaning of the concept. Self, like many other broad terms of science—substance, energy, life, consciousness—, does not lend itself to exact definition. To define a word one must at least establish its position in a series of related terms, be it a class, a form of reaction, or the principle of the Whole. That is to say, we must refer the concept to some other idea which has come within the range of our experience and has left a distinct impression. Common sense has long since done this for the concept of the self, and scientific inquiry has failed to adduce any objections against its continued use. Therefore we shall endeavor to assemble its obvious facts and principles for study and evaluation.

1. Individuality—the First Property of the Moral Self.

When is an object an individual? The fortunes of the word have been various and not always happy. The temptation of the uninstructed mind is to assign the property to every type of body—sun, star, electron, protoplasm, tree, and animal; also to qualities and relations—color, shape, odor, cause. It is taken to mean a property which sets off a given body from every other and from the whole. Recent practice tends to restrict its application. Individuality is to be ascribed only to those bodies whose parts bear such a

relation to the whole structure that neither can be conceived without the other. It is quite possible that this property might apply to a seed, a germ, or a particular cell; but scientific opinion has agreed to confine the use of the term to a body which has its purpose within itself and which is not obliged to look outside for the fulfillment of its function. For this reason, a machine could never be called an individual; it is not separated from the purposes of its maker or its manipulator. The purpose of the organism, on the other hand, is internal; it gives unity and continuity to organic behavior. This principle is ultimately represented in the solidarity of the human self. Moral acts combine into an order of thinking quite as distinctive as the unitary movement of body. The problem is one of great complexity, but some solution must be formed. To reach it, we may examine the types of interests embodied in every experience.

(a) Take first the knowing process: Does it aim at and succeed in attaining a concrete and articulated end? No mature mind will refrain from claiming the succession of thoughts as its own. The classical analysis is that made by Kant in his "Critique of Pure Reason."¹ He argues that while we cannot determine the actual existence of soul (self), we can, beyond the peradventure of a doubt, trace the course of conscious mental action which terminates in the ability to say "I think." The process is synthetic. It gathers up the crude materials of sensation and constructs the independent manifold which the eye perceives—a book, a table, a man. It summons that intangible element Time, and connects the images imbedded in memory with the new percept of the senses. Finally, it extracts from the old image and the new, and from similar experiences, the chief common elements and converts them into a concept. That the synthetic process is effective may be seen from the inescapable change in behavior provoked by the enunciation of a word like *fire* or *friend* or *war*, or even of such abstract terms as *honor* or *justice* or *revenge*. But the story is as yet

¹I am indebted to Professor John Laird for this suggestion. See his "Problems of the Self," p. 218, *et seq.*

only half told. Judgment, we have urged, is the central point in conduct; it continues the synthetic movement and unites diverse concepts into a new relation, that relation which gives to human endeavor its true and distinguishing worth. Here we develop such momentous aspects of thought as those connoted by the words *causality, interaction, permanence*, all of which, in default of proof for the existence of Self, we apply to the progress of experience. The analysis makes us certain that mind converges irresistibly upon itself; the individual's experience is an integrated whole.

For ethics, the significance of the argument is stupendous. It affirms that every judgment is composed both of the materials of perception and the hidden principles of thought. The genesis of intellect has nothing to do with the concrete problem; we must understand its present terms, which may be summarized as follows: A distinct moral situation is presented for consideration. We apprehend its several factors through the avenues of sense perception; we then compare it with previous experiences, together with the deductions made from them; lastly, we decide upon the course appropriate in this situation, and at once proceed to turn the decision into organic action. Let the situation be somewhat like this. Every national group is wont to construe certain public interests as nonjusticiable issues in international intercourse—changes in territorial boundaries; satisfaction of affairs of honor, such as the treatment of its nationals; the invasion of the rights of political sovereignty. The question of immigration is one of these. If we suppose that a second nation proposes to settle a colony within the confines of the first and to exercise the rights of eminent domain therein, we are at once faced by a conflict of authority. Adjustment cannot be arrived at by the arts of litigation before any recognized court. From the point of view of the first government, there is no matter in dispute; the proposal is impossible. If the colony is to be settled, it can be done in one way only; that is, by force. The synthetic process is plain. The original claim is made by document or speech; it is compared with the fundamental rights of

sovereignty and found to be in conflict. Serious argument then ensues between diplomatic representatives, where the moral values at stake will appear as eloquent advocates for either cause. Governments speak as self-conscious individuals; each has its rights, its duties, and its invincible honor. The case cannot be adjudicated by compromise; it is withdrawal by one, surrender by the other, or war! The synthetic composition of all judgment, public or private, is typified by such a situation. Moral decision rests on the purposes of the Self as an individual agent.

(b) The unitary self is also expressed in the exertions of will. No man seems to doubt it. William James has brilliantly analyzed the distinguishable forms of self. The bodily self is the primary instrument of experience. From early childhood to the maturity of age no subject can safely disregard the singleness of his physical equipment. The sense of effort appearing in any part of the body is registered as his and none other's. In contact with external bodies, the expended energy is held to be the output of his essential nature. Thus, when David goes forth to meet the challenger, when Hector, panoplied in the mail of battle, descends to the plain for combat with his inveterate adversary, when Demosthenes rises in the Agora to hurl his bitter philippics against the invader from the North, each actor in turn recognizes his physical presence as a true and indisputable individuality. It is this admission that gives the first hint of the reality of a man's responsibility for the deed to be performed.

James then proposes to extend the scope of the application. We possess a social self as distinct and potential as the individual self. It is already involved in the contacts just noted. It becomes our companion in the daily round of commonplace experiences. The teacher and his disciples, the physician and his patients, the lawyer and his clients, the merchant and his patrons, even the engineer and his instruments of steel and concrete, are exponents of the type of selfhood under review. Besides these, every man has a multitude of collateral selves embodied in his avocational

relations. The two groups at times conflict; hence, as the interests of the body must be reconciled, as for instance when physical exhaustion competes with the desire for play, so the more massive conflicts require settlement in the arena of social intercourse.

But conflict presupposes a standard of action, and the standardizing power lies in the authority of the self. Here, the third self of James' analysis emerges, the spiritual self, the self that thinks, the self that leads to decisive action.

First of all, I am aware of a constant play of furtherances and hindrances in my thinking, of checks and releases, tendencies which run with desire, and tendencies which run the other way. Among the matters I think of, some range themselves on the side of the thought's interests, whilst others play an unfriendly part thereto. The mutual inconsistencies and agreements, reinforcements and obstructions, which obtain amongst those objective matters reverberate backwards and produce what seem to be incessant reactions of my spontaneity upon them, welcoming or opposing, appropriating or disowning, striving with or against, saying yes or no. This palpitating inward life is, in me, that central nucleus which I have just tried to describe in the terms that all men might use.²

The decisions reached by this self embrace not alone the objective relations with other personal units in society but also the deeper aspirations that go beyond the borders of empirical attestation and sink into the mysteries of religion. In every case man is a single observer, a single thinker, a single actor. To be an individual, we said, is to have our purposes within; to be a human self is to act upon these purposes as our own.

(c) Finally, feeling sets its confirmatory stamp upon the identical unity of the person. It is sometimes assumed that emotional stresses are vagrant, that they have no habitation or home, that they follow the caprices of an unregulated fancy, that they are of little worth in fixing the independence or character of a self. The opinion is mistaken. We have already demonstrated the natural connection of feel-

² "Principles of Psychology," Vol. I, p. 299.

ing with every moral action. Hence, if it be associated with the part, namely, the act, it must be associated with the whole, the *self that acts*. It may be true that under extraordinary conditions the feeling will fail to emerge, for example, when the mind is overwhelmed by an unforeseen catastrophe, death of friend, loss of goods, disappointment in the quest of preferment. In the main, however, the principle holds true: Given a dominating emotional tendency, it will find expression at every new stage of conscious effort. Ibsen has painted with consummate skill the portrait of the man of unchanging feelings. Brand, the Norwegian pastor, has adopted the maxim of renunciation—all or none—as the ground of religious conduct. His creed is that of will, but his behavior is edged by the affective condition which McDougall has felicitously called “positive self-feeling.”³ He assumes that he sacrifices every ambition to the requirements of law; in reality, he exalts his personal importance at every turn. He braves the storm on the tempestuous fjord in order to minister to the spiritual needs of the dying stranger, but at the same time he reproaches his neighbors because they fear to join him in the dangerous venture. He refuses to give the last rites of comfort to his aged mother, who will not surrender her trust in the value of worldly goods, submerging his native affections in his zeal for obedience to law. He declines to leave the precincts of his mountain home when child and wife sicken and die, though both might have been saved by the favoring warmth of a lower clime. He builds a great cathedral to the glory of his Jehovah despite the human needs that cry for relief on every hand; and when the people fail to echo his lofty sentiments, he throws the key into the river and bids them follow him to nature’s summits for the last and convincing renunciation, only to be swallowed up by the descending avalanche—himself and the half-witted Gerd, his sole remaining disciple. Few interpreters of human experience have penetrated deeper into the sources of moral feelings

³ “Social Psychology,” p. 194. The whole passage should be read.

than Ibsen, and none has insisted more urgently on the power of feeling to test and confirm the solidarity of the self.

2. Character—the Medium for the Expression of Self.

We have assented to the proposition that human experience possesses a concrete and organic center about which all desires, feelings, and judgments are pivoted. Alexander describes the condition as one of equilibrium, a balance of all the contradictory or supplementary sentiments in the presented self.⁴ Figures of speech are hard to handle in analyzing moral relations. They usually resolve themselves into abstract terms—a geometrical point, a law of equivalence in physics—and thus they introduce into ethics the wrong angle of approach. For if self be but a summarizing word, “an abstraction from the facts of our inner experience,” then obviously we have been defeated in the argument of our first section, namely, that self is a necessary and real individuality to which all the elements just noted have been consistently referred. We may decline to accept Green’s thesis that the “eternal subject of the world shall reproduce itself . . . as the spirit of mankind or as the particular self of this or that man in whom the spirit of mankind operates.” There is more “mystery” in his thesis than in the theory he is combating. But we cannot deny the truth of his contention that “all particular feelings, desires, and thoughts are abstractions, if considered otherwise than as united in the character of an agent who is an object to himself.”⁵ He means to say that a central system of reference, a sustained *habitus* (ἕξις) in the Aristotelian sense, is required for the interpretation of all natural tendencies. If it does not exist, then man has not raised his behavior above the level of the brute’s. The central system is called character; our recognition of it as our own is the function of self.

⁴ S. Alexander, “Moral Order and Progress,” p. 108.

⁵ These quotations are from T. H. Green’s “Prolegomena to Ethics,” Sec. 100.

With this understanding of terms, we proceed to examine two facts—the structural elements in all character and the modes by which a specific character is formed.

(a) Is character a solid endowment with which man begins his career in the world? The Stoics argued that, since virtue is the counterpart of reason, and reason is the intelligible aspect of nature, man must have the roots of good character in his native disposition. Modern biology has helped to remove some of the difficulties of the problem. All attainments in structural and functional growth are due to the laws and processes of evolution. Ethics must eventually feel the force of the new idea. We need not go so far as Kropotkin and hold that man has been prepared for the appreciation of such concepts as sacrifice and coöperation by the moral sentiments already at work in the lower orders.⁶ We may properly confine our attention to man's private development, finding ample material there for an analysis of his character. We therefore ask: What body of facts must be studied in order to determine how man acts?

Let us examine first (i) those modes of reaction which are rooted in primitive feeling or instinct and developed by man's ideas of natural forces. The demand for survival is an imperious law and guarantees a struggle for existence. To the furtherance of this end, many folkways have grown up, to be impressed upon the individual by personal fear and tribal discipline. Frazer has recorded the efforts of the members of the group to keep secret their personal names for fear a magic spell might be cast over them and their household by an envious neighbor.⁷ If the name be uttered in public, the strength or weakness of the bearer is exposed to some subtle attack; for name and personality go together. Hence, a tabu is laid upon the intimate sign of self, and another name is adopted for common intercourse. It takes a disciplinary measure like this to establish the sense of individuality. Furthermore, such a measure is supported by the action of the larger group. The youth is inducted

⁶ "Ethics: Origin and Development," p. 16.

⁷ "The Golden Bough," abridged edition, Ch. 22.

officially into the secrets of the tribe when he reaches the age of adolescence. The elaborate ceremonies, the terrifying ordeal, are conceived as instruments for impressing upon him the authority, the unity, of the clan. He is made acquainted with the charms that can meet and defeat the menaces of the enemy. Respect for law is inculcated, obedience to the instituted will, a coherence of physical and mental powers which can successfully confront the most sinister emergency. Sparta has written the classical formula of such discipline. Its very speech, Laconic, has passed into a proverb. Paucity of words means concealment of intent. The novitiate was drilled in the virtues of silence. The actions of the citizen were identified with the legal order of the state; hence, speech was not needed. Thus we see that discipline is a primary *motif* in the making of a distinctive racial type, and finds its earliest expression in the family and then in that enlarged family, the tribe or nation.

Still more effective is the discipline imposed by man's relations to nature. Nature and religion were synonymous. Man's contact with mechanical forces inevitably led to the judgment that evil lay in the essence of body, human, animal, or inorganic substance. Some method must be devised to remove the taint of guilt or fever or corruption, all of them being demonic possessions. The story is full of morbid fascination. The principle of the vicarious transference of evil has not lost its grip on human superstition. Plutarch relates that, as chief magistrate of his village, he presided at the administration of the official ordinance whereby a slave was loaded with the ills of the community and forthwith driven from its precincts.⁸ To be sure, a lively discussion ensued as to the merits of the custom, but it nevertheless remained in force as the natural vehicle for the removal of the taint. Plainly, such ceremonies place the individual under the severest sort of discipline, since the choice may next fall upon his head. He is forced to study the nature and consequences of evil, ceremonial or personal,

⁸ Frazer, *Op. Cit.*, Ch. 58.

and the methods by which it may most effectually be eliminated. In short, the question of sin and punishment is thrust into the foreground of tribal thinking, calling attention to the prescriptive claims of a superior power upon the common reactions of the individual. By all these means has the race sought to train its members in habits and emotional stresses suited to their needs.

With such a history behind him, the moral actor enters upon a stage set with definite forms of behavior. The second (ii) cardinal truth which modern science teaches is the influence of environment. The actual conditions will be defined in the next chapter; we may here refer to one or two elementary principles in the problem. The first is that social relations are necessary; they are facts of nature. We do not choose the community in which we are born, nor do we at the beginning shape its interests. It is, of course, within the scope of will to abandon the neighborhood of one's fellows; in later life one may become a hermit, a recluse, an anchorite. But the normal human being recognizes the significance of Spinoza's dictum that true character can be won only in the give-and-take of social intercourse.⁹ Accordingly, he remains within the confines of the group and, so remaining, submits voluntarily to the multiplied types of contact. To this principle must be joined a second, namely, that environment makes a concrete impression upon the structure of character. The home, the school, and the street meet the mind when its will is plastic; we have little to say as to what ideas we should entertain or what habits of action we should set up. It is different when we reach the period of self-discrimination; but even here the individual desires are subtly molded by the prevailing opinion of the day. There is, it is true, a compensating balance involved in the impressions which we can in turn leave with our neighbors. Hence, the niceties of conduct require that we should organize a moral calculus, noting carefully the contributions made reciprocally by the individual and the

⁹ "Improvement of the Understanding."

group. The progress of moral thought depends on the wisdom with which the calculus is constructed.

We may add now a third (iii) source of character, the course of its private development. We have hitherto admitted that it cannot be a ready-made endowment; if it were, we might predict by the stars at a child's birth what manner of man he would be. But the horoscope is laid aside. The history of a soul begins with the bundle of appetences which seem to be common to all members of the race. It advances to the point where decisions are taken in accordance with the objective canons of behavior. Now it recognizes the difference between approval and reprobation, the one mediated by a smile or encouraging word, the other by the signs of negation and repression. It next constructs in the mind a set of alternatives, associated more or less closely with the sentiments of the group, and attempts to work out ideally the consequences that may follow each. Later it apprehends the presence of a permanent principle operating beneath the sanction of custom, a law that does not change when its material contents vary, a habitude of thought that comes after deep reflection and is grasped by relatively few minds in the social community. It asks, therefore, what hold such a law must have upon its own course of action; must the law be accepted without criticism, or may it be adapted to the experienced needs? The next step is certain: We ask what motives impel us to accept the imperative of the law. Substitutes for law press upon the mind—the emotion of love, respect for our own will, the widening program of social interests. The agent has now reached the level of reflective analysis. Long ere this he has become aware of the continuity of his character; long ago he recognized certain acts as conformed to his regular habits, that is, he accepted his character as his own. He is not simply an individual; he is a man of determined habits of thought.

(b) It is important to understand the universal factors of character. They serve as guides and incentives. At the same time, we should not forget that every man is the "arbiter of his own fortune," and hence is primarily interested in a

single type of habit and action. His problem is: How shall he shape and control his own character when once he has become aware of its structure?

It would seem (i) that he is bound to adopt some decisive program, clear and distinct enough to allow for personal application. In the sequel we shall canvass the competing theories and seek to reach a satisfactory basis. The nature of the program will involve different human interests. Thus, the choice may lie between specific traits of mind, emotional or intellectual. The Romantic school of Germany would suggest that character be molded by the principle of moral beauty, and they might point to some historic figure for us to emulate. The intellectualists would openly repudiate so uncertain a test and insist upon a logical formula as the framework for the new character. Or, the choice may depend upon the competition of seductive claims, my own interests or the interests of my neighbor's in conjunction with my own. Ibsen has conceived another pattern of exceptional complexity. Peer Gynt is the symbol of complete and inflexible egoism. Time and diverting experiences have induced him to analyze his inner states. He has played with the affections of women; he has "taken religion intermittently," for he traded in idol images with China and, in order to annul the possible sting of remorse, sent them Bibles—and rum; he has trafficked in slaves with Africa, transporting them in droves to the Carolinas, where, when conscience pricked, he built them schools and fed their bodies with nutritious meat. In short, he set out to construct a self; what should it be?

The Gyntish Self—it is a host
Of wishes, appetites, desires,—
The Gyntish Self, it is the sea
Of fancies, exigencies, claims,
All that, in short, makes *my* breast heave
And whereby I, as I, exist.¹⁰

The adoption of a theoretical program (ii) must be

¹⁰ "Peer Gynt," Act IV, Scene 1. Trans. by W. C. Archer.

supplemented by a major objective effort. The artist has his creative talent, the scientist his penetrating curiosity, the statesman his problems of conciliation. What has the common man to waken his latent powers, stimulate him to effective action, make his place in the world aflame with unfading light? The answer is—work. Poets and moralists, historians and social agitators, have heaped scorn and contempt on the enervating property of labor. “In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.” Distaste, repugnance, and despair are crystallized in these syllables. How shall man develop the finer sensibilities of soul if he is forced to submit in daylight and dark to such a drain upon his nervous strength that when the moments of leisure come there is no heart left for æsthetic contemplation? Or, how shall a modern workman direct his mind to the diversities of fancy and logical thought if he must stand by the same machine hour after hour, repeating the same small bit of kinæsthetic reaction—no change of ideas, no hope of change, an automatic contrivance of flesh and blood? Obviously, moral character cannot readily be formed under the inspiration of this dogma. The definition of work must be revised.

Work is not the sullen pursuit of an uncomprehended “job;” it is the exhibition and practice of skill,¹¹ the controlled initiative of an alert intelligence. It is true that the direction of the apprentice’s work by the kindly eye of the master is now an almost forgotten practice of the long past. The tyranny of the machine has eliminated it. But the knowledge of one’s task is always possible, and its moral implications are disclosed by closer acquaintance with its demands. Since this is the one universal objective from which no man is exempt, it behooves us to study its meanings—how it develops the capacities of mind and body, how it teaches order, attention, steadiness of behavior, how it leaps with delight at the sign of play, how it establishes a rhythm of action between the individual and his group.

¹¹ L. P. Jacks has an illuminating study of this subject in “Constructive Citizenship.”

Character comes to the surface most effectively in the performance of the daily task.

There is one further (iii) point to be noted. Conduct is a kind of dialectic, the thesis being the program or ideal, the antithesis the kind of effort pursued, and the synthesis, or reconciling fact, the series of checks and balances which unite the two. No man can shut his eyes to certain habits which interfere with the formation of an harmonious character. Take such a quality as slovenliness of thought. It was not formally adopted as a constitutive trait, yet it stares us in the face at every turn. We are aware that our moral influence is hurt by its presence. Many parents strive to train their children in quickness and thoroughness of thinking and allow their own disability to go uncured. But balance of character can only be obtained by a series of checks. Political science has developed an elaborate scheme in the administration of governmental relations, as in the American Constitution. The principle is that balance cannot exist except where legislative and executive powers are carefully restricted. Moral duties require the same kind of limitation; they cannot be properly discharged when our examination of their intent is lax and inadequate. It may be true that a man's solicitude for his own interests rarely suffers through defects of character, but his wider responsibilities are seriously impaired and consistency of conduct is rendered impossible.

3. Spontaneity—the Consummatory Principle of Selfhood.

The ability of the agent to make decision of and for himself is the highest test of his independence. This property may be called his spontaneity. The term is used by Kant to define the response of mind to presented sense data under the forms of time and space. Thought begins at that point. We are advised that the mental act is something more than a series of changes in the cortex of the brain; the mental act assumes the attitude of control. Now control is always directive, never creative. Thus, we may not attempt to

change the office of any organ of the body; we may merely determine what group of stimuli shall be presented for consideration. We may not endeavor to break the usual series of ideas or feelings which experience has established, but we can turn the mind to the study of a new concept which will bring with it its own train of related ideas.

Specifically, the agent may resolve to change the course of a moral habit, but with no unqualified assurance that the desired effect will be obtained. The Kantian formula, "I ought, therefore I can," is a counsel of perfection. With regret we confess that good intentions are shattered on the reefs of reality. Still, the idea of "ought" is in itself an index of the spontaneous assertion of power. Its significance lies in the fact that we accept such spontaneity as our own, for example, when we choose between possible courses of action. Choice means the weighing of contrary, or at any rate mutually exclusive, proposals and the selection of one as the object of behavior. Nothing is implied as to its ultimate realization. The simple question is: Can I identify myself with one of the alternatives before the mind? This picture, in my judgment, is beautiful, the other is not; this scientific method is successful, the other is not. The sense of spontaneity now becomes a seasoned instrument of reflection. The free conation of the animal mind is turned into the deliberate sanction of one judgment as against another. Impulse and choice are forever distinguished. Many actions that seemed to spring from unchartered impulse are found to be quick decisions imbued with rational intent, hence, the true expressions of freedom. We have reached here the consummatory property of selfhood.

Yet we may not argue that choice is without determinative antecedents. We have already considered the structural elements that make up an integrated character. Self is the function of character and must therefore depend for its freedom of action on the stage of development attained by the agent. The immature mind cannot grapple with the problems of ethics as the veteran scholar can. Individual freedom is contingent upon the absorption of the achieve-

ments of the past. Butler admits that conscience, which is his name for a discriminating self, acts according to the settled interest of human nature. At the same time, it "plainly bears upon it the marks of authority over all the rest and claims the absolute direction of them all, to allow or forbid their gratification."¹² He does not, however, expect the untrained agent to make his choice with infallible adherence to the demands of virtue. The operation of the several factors will enable him by slow degrees to understand the meaning of selfhood and to exercise his freedom with ever-increasing sureness of judgment. In this way the true forms of moral conduct will eventually appear.

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¹² "Sermons," Preface.

CHAPTER IX

MAN AND HIS GROUP

1. Nature of the Associated Group.

The plain fact of observation is that man is not a separate and isolated unit in the order of nature. Romantic fancy has sought to determine what sort of a person such a psychic phenomenon would be. Defoe created Robinson Crusoe and left him at first to his own devices on a desert island, forcing him to meet the exigencies of solitude as best he could. But social habitudes and the dramatic setting of the story show how all human instincts depend for their expression on the interrelation of intelligent subjects. Experiments have been set up in scientific laboratories to discover, if possible, just what native elements in behavior respond to the stimulus of personal presence. An important body of pertinent facts is now on the table of the investigator. While we are unable to conclude that gregariousness is a necessary and original factor in human nature, we can at least hold that in moral conduct no personality is complete without the acceptance of rights and duties such as are involved in social exchange. Hence, the next step in our treatment of the materials of ethics must be an analysis of the relationships within which moral behavior is to be developed.

Experts are not agreed upon the term which most satisfactorily describes the contact between man and man. State, society, community, neighborhood, group, have successively commanded assent and support. Each of these has its specific implications, ranging from perfect organic unity to a voluntary association of independent wills. Those who believe in the organic unity assert that over and above individual minds gathered within a prescribed area there

stands a general mind, distinguishing its constituent parts and exerting a peculiar pressure upon them. Those who believe in voluntary association argue for the affiliation of men by private consent into a larger group, where authority rests strictly on the agreed vote of the majority. Supporters of the first theory have invented significant symbols—social organism, group mind, civic consciousness, common will, public opinion—all of which embody the ultimate truth that men are not independent units in the group, whose actions, when summed together, make the action of the state; they are integers in a new kind of whole exactly parallel to the intelligence of man. The prototype of this theory, we are told, is found in Plato's "Republic." The state is the individual soul writ large. If there be three functions in the human mind, impulse, emotion, and intellect, these same functions will reside in the state. If there be a common principle, justice, which unites all the activities of the individual, the same principle will cement the solidarity of the group. The parallel between the single mind and the Great Mind is perfect.¹

It is open to question whether this is the correct interpretation of Plato's language. He insists in an unambiguous passage that the state arises "out of the needs of mankind."² This means that human desires must be accepted as the standard of judgment both for private character and public action. Social values are then determinable not by the edict of the state but by the recognized ends of conduct. This being true, the monistic definitions we have just considered cannot appeal to Plato as their source and guaranty; they must stand on their own merits. Can they do so? A theory can go no further than the terms it adopts. Hence, we ask, does a social organism exist? It can exist only if we may conceive that the aggregate of human beings in a given community is the same as the structure of a physical body. To be organic, a body must not only have a common function, a determinate purpose, but also a structural complex

¹ "Republic," p. 368, *et seq.*; p. 441, *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 369.

acting always under the behest of the inherent impulse. The best conclusion that can be reached is recorded in the words of Professor Hocking: "We cannot say that the organic quality is fully realized in the state; the analogy fails in respects which, in almost every biological type, would be vital. We can only say, within bounds, that the state behaves like an *organism in the making*."³ But this destroys the meaning of the analogy and with it the main support to the theory under review.

Suppose we now change the metaphor and refer to a "social mind" which, having the same intrinsic powers, inflexibly controls the individual minds of the group. Serious questions at once emerge. Where is the common mind? What are its manifest pronouncements? Whence do they arise? How do the judgments of mind influence the behavior of the body politic? The answers are conflicting. Can we formulate definitively the sentiment of a group on a specific subject at a given time, as for example, slavery in America in the year 1850? Or, can we explain in what way public sentiment is authoritatively expressed, whether by leading men in leading parties, by the published works of expert investigators, by the vote of a particular electorate, by the verdict of a judicial court, by the solemn resolutions of a religious convocation? The slow and oftentimes intermittent hardening of a specific opinion, let us say, concerning America's entrance into the World War, does not reveal the movements of a single mind, but rather the harmonizing of diverse judgments under the spur of urgent necessity. The unitary system of behavior which characterizes the life of the individual is wholly absent from the activities of the state. Even the fixed traditions and beliefs which yield the impression of a common origin are by no means essential to the behavior of a community and may, indeed, be discarded at the insistence of a militant minority.

We can see but one issue to the argument, namely, that a society is a union of persons attached to a settled territory

³ "Man and the State," p. 350.

and owning allegiance to a set of common purposes which severally and together they endeavor to put into action.

2. Principles Governing Association in the Group.

We therefore push our inquiry at once into the nature of the purposes which govern social relations, these purposes being already defined as belonging to the economic and political modes of behavior. Loyalty, freedom, and organization—we may consider them arranged in the form of a social dialectic, in the Hegelian sense of the term.

(a) It may be taken for granted that no general status can long be maintained if the contributing minds are without devotion to a settled principle. The typical instance is the sanctity of the family hearth. Here the Lares and Penates are established, and here reverence and filial affection have their home. The habits of intercourse are fixed by the needs of the group, and to these habits all members are obliged to adhere. What emotional traits constrain the child or servant to obey? One factor, certainly, is the fear of condign punishment which confronts a recalcitrant will. Again, pride in the merits of the common enterprise is a vigorous incentive to conformity. Or, respect for the wisdom and prowess of the titular head is evoked by evidences of his successful leadership. Loyalty thus far is prevailingly personal. It soon turns to the scrupulous observance of custom. Custom represents the united zeal of the community. The dissenter meets with disapproval, not to say energetic repression, and for this reason hastens to adopt current practices as his own. On the positive side, he discovers that his private purposes are best expressed in habits that have the unqualified assent of his neighbors. He therefore identifies himself with the spirit and instruments of the common order—the festal games, the religious ceremonies, the civil ordinances, all of which become teleological extensions of his own personality.

On a wider platform he merges his affections into the dominant institutions of the group. The Samurai of Japan,

the caste system of India, the trade guilds of the Middle Ages, the schools of creative art in Italy—Perugia, Siena, Florence—are symbols of devotion to spiritual ideals whose significance the participant at first but dimly understands. It requires education, the attrition of experience, the tuition of superior intelligences, to convert his loyalty into an intelligent incentive to moral action. Law, once the implement of sheer coercion, is now the token of social harmony into which we voluntarily merge our prescriptive ambitions. Patriotism no longer has its source in habit or necessity but in reflective appreciation of the nation's character. In short, loyalty is the primary axiom of communal existence; no family or clan or class or country can successfully resist the wear of time except by conscious and tenacious adhesion to its rightful sentiments and traditions. This is the thesis of the dialectic.

(b) The antithetical purpose, freedom, is just as impressive. Moral stagnation is sure to fall upon any community that exacts an indiscriminating and slavish submission to its ruling code. The pages of history are shaded by the record of denatured ideals. It seems incredible that the culture of Greece should have been shorn of its glory by neglect of its crowning passion, the sovereignty of the individual mind. For its abasement came not through the intrusion of military might; Philip could never have forced the gates of Thermopylæ so long as some new Leonidas with his unflinching heroes stood on guard. The seeds of decay were within. The emasculated body of thought that confronted the eloquent defender of Grecian rights reveals how completely the old freedom had disappeared. Instead of the biting sarcasm of Socrates, we hear the soothing syllables of Epicurus; instead of the challenge to rugged virtue, we catch the hint to suspend all judgment as to the very meaning of the term. Loyalties crumble under the weight of their own inertia. The form may persist, but the spirit is gone.

The dialectic demands an empirical expression of freedom. What is freedom in a world of civic movement? It is assumed by some that it is the instrument of self-defense.

Men by nature are in a state of war; they "live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal."⁴ Appetites and affections are their only laws, the supreme and indefeasible rights of their human heritage. Since, however, nature has given every man the same kind of self-assurance, it becomes needful in due time to make a compromise of freedom by the surrender of certain private prerogatives, notably that of taking a neighbor's life. Actions once deemed good and salutary are now, under the ægis of law, declared to be base and unjust. The misery that "accompanied the liberty of particular men" is forthwith excluded, and in its stead emerge the appropriate rewards of industry and peace. Justice has no place for the unrestrained and antisocial behavior of lawless men, the Rodrigo Cids who despoil the countryside for their own advantage. Hence, freedom as thus defined is another name for the dominance of animal impulse and as such is utterly contradictory to the essence of constituted law.

The second definition of the term makes it identical with individualism. In the distributive actions of the social community the individual obtains his prescribed and irrevocable rights, especially in the sphere of trade and industry. It has been held, and still is held, that civil authority should abstain from all interference with the plans and policies of the merchant, the artisan, and the manufacturer; the true economic principle is the *laissez-faire* or let-alone maxim—no regulation, no supervision, no restrictive legislation, a clear field for competition, and the honors to the best! The principle has also been extended to more personal experiences. Backed up by the Cubists in art, the Naturalists in literature, the rebels against all coercion in moral habits, the advocate of individualism is having his flaming day in court, to the consternation of conservative citizens. The program of individualism, however, is the protest against existing inequalities; it is not the crystallization of abiding

⁴ Hobbes, "Leviathan," Bk. I, Ch. 13.

truths. For neither art nor morals can be wholly individualistic. Even though the men who claim the peculiar privileges appertaining to the principle should chance to be endowed with superior gifts, as a Bernard Shaw or a Richard Wagner, individualism could be nothing more than the vehicle of social exchange for the expression of talent. The giant types of industrial producers—strange specters of the present age—are but faithful reflections of the dominant interests common to men in the group. To grant any citizen a degree of liberty beyond the limits of justified moral responsibility, simply because he exhibits unusual traits in unusual directions, is quite unthinkable. The judgment of ethics is final.

What man, then, is socially free? The free man possesses three representative properties, initiative, respect for law, and mutual regard.⁵ The first shows that society has no desire to rob a gifted man of his birthright but, on the other hand, expects to aid him in every way in his struggle for personal development. Since all progress is pivoted upon the ultimate, though often reluctant, admission of such a right, we have before us ample evidence of its empirical value. The connection of liberty and law will be the subject of extended meditation later;⁶ we may here merely point out that organized sentiment, whether in the narrow community or in the broad areas of the civil state, is possible only if men are free to think and talk and act in accordance with the best rules of moral judgment. Finally, the element of mutuality is a problem of great social consequence. In the sheltered confines of the family its grave difficulties are by no means overcome. In fact, they have been measurably enhanced by the new position of self-determination of women, which we find evidenced, for example, by their acquisition of the electoral franchise. Each succeeding social advance demands a careful revision of communal duties in the particular field. To adapt one's wishes and will to the

⁵ Hobhouse, "Social Development," p. 78.

⁶ *Infra*, Pt. III, Ch. 2; Pt. IV, Ch. 5.

needs and expectations of the group is the cardinal maxim of moral freedom.

(c) The summation of the dialectic is embodied in the concept of organization. It is proper to distinguish the word from its familiar congener which we have rejected as the equivalent of collective behavior. Society is not organic in the biological sense, but it may be described as *organized*. To organize means to arrange in the systematic order of space and time certain factors that naturally belong to the given group. The process is an instrument of logic, a method designed to indicate the adoption of a governing principle together with the events and conditions subsumed under it. Hence, while society cannot be called a "psychic individuality of a new order," we find in its movements an ever-growing complexity of group functions which may be interpreted only by the logical category of unity, to wit, organization.⁷ Obviously, every man who takes part in the social drama—conducting a business, teaching in a university, sitting in committee upon important community interests—is directly conscious of his neighbor's reactions to his ideas and is himself in turn influenced by such reactions. The sympathetic response of the group, large or small, to the solution of a definite problem gives evidence of a collective body of opinion, bordering almost on the solidary judgment of a single mind. Still, we must remember that all such unanimity is logical in character; it represents the individual acceptances of a concrete proposal and the union of independent wills in the execution of its terms. Each step in the organization of ideas through habits or institutions means the reconciliation of a new opinion with sentiments already long in vogue. For this reason, it has all the marks of a genuine psychological synthesis.

We shall examine the principle with the aid of historic perspective. The earliest organized group was no doubt the family. In the twilight of its development, a division of labor took place, the men generally seeking for food and

⁷Cf. "Study in Moral Theory," by John Laird, p. 265. The reader may also consult McDougall's "Group Mind," Introduction.

defending the post, the women making the home. Physiological differences dictated the kind of employment. The multiplication of social needs, coincident with the growth of mental powers and the slow conquest of environment, diversified the forms of labor. Plato has defined the respective limits of endeavor—men who provide for material wants, men who protect the clan from invasion; the small but trained group who exercise administrative and retributory control. Except for the temporary dominion of a religious order, this general type of organization has persisted to the modern period. Revolutionary changes in the social regimen followed the invention of machinery. The scattered apprentice shops gave way to the concentrated economy of the factory. The fatherly solicitude of the master was exchanged for the herding call of capital. Long hours and uncleanly conditions told heavily on the health and morale of the workers, and their dissatisfaction was expressed in the formation of trades unions. On the other side, employers were disturbed by the threat of strikes, the sharpness of competition, the demand for governmental intervention. In order to avoid competition and to deal effectively with their employees, large corporations came into being, seeking authority from the state to perform their integral tasks. Sequent to this extraordinary movement has come the demand on the part of workmen for participation in the management of business. Industrial democracy, parallel to the franchise in the state, is the new program of Labor. Thus, economic organization goes on apace; but it can never reach its proper goal until the dual organizing process dissolves into a common habit of thought and action. Such a habit may be interpreted as man's united effort to master physical nature, in the soil, in the mine, in the air, on the sea. Here inventor, investor, manager, worker, conspire to wrest from reluctant matter its unexplored and precious secrets.

No less impressive have been men's effort to organize the factors of intelligence. Education, beginning in the family, with due regard to individual and collective interests, sought

to train the mind for the necessary tasks of life. Here incipient genius is first detected and encouraged, here man's relations with the wider community are first emphasized. Education is the enemy of isolation, particularism, intolerance; it seeks to draw the forces of intellect and emotion into a working agreement. Hence, it sets up instruments of public instruction—schools, libraries, museums, the press, the theater. It urges men to obtain a first-hand and thorough acquaintance with the laws of nature, especially the principles of mental action. It aids them to reach back to the forgotten archives of the past, both for valuable information and for discriminating guidance. It excites in them a love of the imagination, a respect for its powers, and a desire to excel in its use by the creation of eternal forms through the media of marble, figured canvas, the spoken and written symbols of human speech, and the harmonies of sound. Above all, it stirs the soul to the emulation of the noble properties of mind embodied in historic characters, through an analysis of the moral principles which controlled their conduct. In every avenue of thought, education combines the achievements of economics with its intellectual ends to produce the first fruits of a good society. Loyalty and spontaneous feeling are at length in union, and the social dialectic is complete.

3. The Supreme Type of Association, the State.

The capstone of all social relations is found in the state. Realism requires that we recognize this objective fact. Man is born within the precincts of a political society as certainly as in the bosom of a family. He learns early that there are well-defined civil obligations. In the modern world, legal organization has assumed proportions staggering to the imaginations of a simpler community. If we study the methods of compulsory registration now in vogue, we shall understand how complicated every form of human intercourse has become. The physician must submit to

severe examination at the hands of an official body of experts before he can be licensed to practice his profession. The medicines he prescribes must be dispensed by registered pharmacists who have proven in a legal manner their right to perform the act. The birth of the child must be formally registered in the bureau of vital statistics. If he is to inherit his portion of the family estate, the parent's last will and testament must be duly "signed, sealed, and delivered." From the cradle to the grave the state lays its authoritative imprint upon public and private behavior.

What is the nature of the power that can exact such explicit conformity? The sanctions of other social exchanges—morals, religion, art, even economics—are vague, not to say incoherent. Here the sanction is of a form that can be physically enforced. Analysis shows that the authority of the state is sovereign and coördinating; it is the only authority that possesses these properties.

(a) The state is endowed with an original and inclusive sovereignty. No theory of political organization can deny this axiom. We mean by the term the ability of government to guarantee to its citizens the fulfillment of all those rights which spring from the structural capacities of the personality, such as the preservation of life, the cultivation of the mind, the expression of emotional aptitudes, the acquisition of the necessary material substance. The one power in all the social complex that can undertake so great a task is the state. But, in the very act of assuming corporate jurisdiction, it recognizes other social ends lying beyond its legal scope. Its attitude towards all possibly competing authority has been admirably set forth by Hocking:

The state serves *to set other groups free* to find their own due extent and duration. . . . The state *sets other individuals free* from the primitive bondage of spacial nextness, free also to decide for themselves what group they do and do not wish to belong to. . . . The state *sets the mind free*, by promoting a growing sensitiveness and intelligence in ordering its social connections.⁸

⁸ "Man and the State," p. 151.

The principle thus enunciated has been flatly denied on two different grounds. Because it seems to relegate to non-political control some of the most important factors in social experience, it meets the express reprobation of Bosanquet, who holds that "the state has no determinate function in a larger community, but is itself the supreme community;" that it is the "guardian of the whole world but not a factor within an organized moral world."⁹ From another point of view men have challenged the right of the state to exercise essential sovereignty over particular interests, which, perhaps, at an earlier date have held a dominant place of authority. Thus, the priests of religion assume that their prescriptive power is from God and cannot be mediated through the persons of civil officials. Hence, they are authorized to counsel and command on all matters appertaining to human conduct. The problem is extremely delicate and should be considered without heat or passion.¹⁰ In a rationally ordered state, a conflict of authority in the application of fundamental guaranties cannot be tolerated. Such matters as marriage, disposition of property, punishment of criminal offenders, are in the hands of the civil courts, and there they will remain.

Still, we cannot be too emphatic in our protest against the state's encroachment upon prerogatives that belong by their very nature to individuals or voluntary associations. The determination of moral issues must not pass to the jurisdiction of another, even though it be the highest in the group. The gigantic experiment now in progress in America, whereby the behavior of a citizen is seriously restricted by statutes, seems almost like a direct invasion of the formal rights specifically granted to him by the organic law. It is open to question whether a government through its constitutional processes can exclude from the field of private responsibility an important expression of choice. History shows that men fight with frenzied zeal for

⁹ "Philosophical Theory of the State," 2nd ed., p. 324. Cf. Hobhouse's criticisms in "Metaphysical Theory of the State," p. 111.

¹⁰ Cf. "Christianity and the State," by W. Temple.

the preservation of the right to choose. Statesmen therefore are wise, considerably wise, who limit the state's regulatory measures to the very margin of private duties. Locke's maxim is mandatory: *Salus populi suprema lex*—the welfare of the people is the highest law.¹¹ In substance, the criterion should always be: Does the exercise of private rights interfere in any way with the welfare of society? If the answer is affirmative, then I must be restrained from the proposed action; if negative, then I may take it for granted that no civil ordinance can annul or limit my judgment.

(b) If we grant that the state is supreme in the adjudication of vital interests, we may then inquire how its authority is to be made effective. The answer depends on the definition of the state. Is the state a moral person, a rational self, a general will, endowed with intuitive powers to see and do the right and just thing? Correlative with the assumption that society is a conscious mind has gone the doctrine that the state is an efficacious will. The theory is supported by an appeal to historic fact—the unlimited monarchy of the Tsars, the federated empire of the Germans, the corporate unity of the Fascist state. The decrees of the state are the potential decrees of every subject of the state; they are not the collective judgments of individual thinkers. A necessary corollary follows: The state can do no wrong. Every law is a permanent and constructive factor in the social well-being; it is the instrument by which the several interests of the people are conjoined and coördinated. Law, therefore, must be obeyed without debate or dissent.

The theory is open to grave objections. Apart from the psychological fallacy which we have already examined, there are certain practical difficulties that may not be ignored. First, the so-called *general will* is, in the majority of cases, merely the will of a few aggressive minds superimposed upon the mass of subject wills which play no part in the decision. This is true even in states where the prin-

¹¹ "Civil Government," Ch. 13.

ciple of representation is still a traditional axiom. Secondly, governments change, change radically, change so completely that not a vestige remains of their former character. Soviet Russia is a convincing example at the present moment. Thirdly, the decisions of legislators and judges frequently turn out to be wrong, as impartial statesmen admit. Replying to the contention of the Nietzschean school, we hold that there are not two standards of moral judgment, one for the multitude, the other for the masters. State action and individual action must be appraised by the same code. "A commonwealth does wrong," says Spinoza, "when it acts against the dictate of reason," that is, when it performs some act "which may be the cause of its ruin."¹² We are thus thrown back upon the Realistic theory that the state is the natural collection of wills and that it acts by such rational judgments as it can at the time bring to a unified decision.

How, then, can a state compounded of diverse and incongruous unit-wills perform the office of coördination? The Kantian school supports the doctrine that will is essentially force, since will is always embodied in law, either prescriptive or organic, and law is executed by restraint upon the person or goods of the dissenter. The answer to the claim is that government provides for the realization of personal ideals in a social situation, and coercion is not an appropriate instrument for reaching that end. Still less effective is the enactment of pertinent statutes. A nation has never been made moral by developing a legislative code. The argument rests upon a strange syllogism of practical logic, that an indiscriminate vote taken, for example, under the spell of post-war emotions, can change the habits of generations. No; the power of coördination does not lie in physical restraint or statutory provisions, but rather in the subtle influence of the state looking to the creation of a desire for social justice. Thus, in a concrete case already studied, the performance of substantial labor by brain or body is the

¹² "Treatise on Politics," Ch. 4.

first objective duty of every citizen. Is it too much to expect that public authority should eventually set up those processes which will yield a sum of necessary labor sufficient to give qualified men a comfortable wage? The proposal is typical of the new relations between the citizen and his state; it signifies the mode by which the diversified interests of society are to be sympathetically coördinated.

4. History—the Progressive Expression of Human Interests.

The principle of all organic synthesis is development. It is the habit of scientists to distinguish between changes observable in passing from one biological order to another and changes taking place within a single species. The latter are most notable in the sphere of human experience, because here the subject wields a powerful instrument of change in his reflective consciousness. It is therefore the fashion in certain quarters to ascribe all progress to the operation of natural laws, especially that of the survival of the fittest. The theory assumes that a social group must modify its environment and concurrently alter its constitutional traits. Otherwise stagnation will set in, and stagnation entails decay.

A new application of this general doctrine is to be found in Spengler's "Decline of the West." Evolution and devolution follow in succession. History is a series of cycles, nine in number, each series corresponding closely to the racial strains affected. It begins with the units of men or clans subject to the priest-king; this is the age of mythological representations. It advances to a stage of feudalism, where an attempt is made to examine the philosophical materials collected. It rises to its zenith in the creation of the city-state, where men submit their concepts to severe logical analysis. It begins to decline with the assumption by the proletarians of their submerged rights, a process coincident with the rise of anarchic ideas of every sort. This last period, termed by Spengler "civilization," the cycle in which European society is now living, is ripe for such con-

solidation of authority as we find to-day in Italy and Spain and nascent in many other states. Through these several cycles the nine racial cultures have passed; some are entirely extinct; others in a moribund condition; one, our own, tobogganing to oblivion. The Hegelian method is the guiding thread in this interesting study. Does its logical precision leave a place for an independent determination of character such as rational psychology requires?

The hypothesis we have just studied is, no doubt, a direct challenge to the "economic interpretation of history" made familiar by the writings of Karl Marx. The hard determinism of change is evident in both. The struggle incident to change is bitter and painful. Spengler retains the high *motifs* of art and philosophy; Marx knows nothing but the brute needs of living. The struggle is concentrated; two classes are in pitched battle, Capital and Labor, those who have and those who have not. State, patriotism, culture, religion, have been developed by and are on the side of wealth; they are the uncriticized symbols of power. "The idea of God is the keystone of a perverted civilization; it must be destroyed. The true root of liberty, of equality, of culture, is Atheism. Nothing must restrain the spontaneity of the human mind."¹³ Now, since the two classes are opposed, and since Capital cannot exist without Labor, because Capital seizes the surplus of Labor's gains and lives upon them, it follows that in due time Capital must disappear. The massive experiment in European Russia since 1917 shows how the principles of Marx have actually been put to work. There the relation of employer and workman is extinct; private property does not exist; the Soviet state is the employer, and workmen are citizens of the state. That, at least, is the theory. No one can predict what the issue will be. Suffice it to say that every nation in the world has felt the impress of the new economic will, and every student of history has been obliged to ask whether we have in this theory the true interpretation of social life.

¹³ Quoted from W. Marr by John Rae, "Contemporary Socialism," p. 136.

This is not the place for detailed criticism; we simply raise the crucial question which must be answered: Is life more than meat and the body than raiment? Does history show nothing but the slow conquest of matter and the mechanical saving of time? Is "control of production" the sole ambition that intelligent society seeks to realize? The answer is plain. Not Cræsus with his treasures, not the great landowners of Italy, not even Spartacus with his rebellious slaves, but the thinkers and artists of Greece, the statesmen and publicists of Rome, are the permanent figures in the Hall of Fame. Creative ideas, great moral emotions, not bushels of wheat or tons of steel, have determined the curve of social progress.¹⁴

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¹⁴ Cf. H. J. Laski, "Communism," Home University Library.

CHAPTER X

THE LAWS OF VALUE

We have traversed the preliminary field of study, having examined the several types of materials with which ethics has to do. The physiological factors, the system of desires, the power of control, the emotional content, the explicit judgment, the concept of selfhood, and the place of man in his group are all constituent parts of moral behavior. Before we proceed to discuss the theories of conduct as historically set up, we may pause to analyze still another category, which serves as a basis of all scientific interpretation. The principle of value, conceived under such terms as good, utility, purpose, interest, has been frequently taken as the sole criterion of action. Is this application just? Value is the generic idea of which all subordinate standards are specific forms. Thus, right, which is said to be the equivalent of law in nature, unequivocally binding on all human endeavor, appears on analysis to require an answer to such questions as, why should this rule be accepted as valid? and, how can it make man's habits the sure vehicles of virtue? When Kant falls back upon the moral imperative as the unerring expression of man's rational will, he insensibly turns to the dignity of the self as the ultimate end of all judgment. Unless we can test the worth of an act by the operation of the functions we have described in the preceding chapters, we shall never be in a position to say whether a proposed course of behavior is essentially moral. Hence, the idea of value must be carefully considered.

1. Value, the Cardinal Principle of Conduct.

To set a value on an object or event is to determine what purpose it serves in the economy of our own or our neigh-

bor's experience. The tendency to isolate and express a given purpose seems to be coeval with the rise of intelligence. It belongs to animal as well as to man, and, when embodied in a conceptual judgment, stands forth as a definite guide to all conscious behavior. The earliest cry of a child is an assertion of value, showing the relation between his physical condition and his contact with the external world. The quest for food is an acknowledgment of its value as a means for satisfying certain inner cravings. The sensory system grows ever more acute in its ability to discriminate and use its multiplying impressions. Water is cold and quenches the thirst; fire is hot and burns the flesh; air is cool and refreshes the fevered brow under the pressure of the summer heat. On a more refined level, music by its melodious cadences calms a soul harassed by fears or alarms. Some new and compelling idea clears away the haze of doubt that has brooded for a season over the mind. A sudden memory of pleasure past shoots like a ray of sunshine through the monotonous gray of a day's work. These are commonplace instances of value, the conception of an end which may be realized by a specific object or event. In the course of time, we begin to generalize upon the incidental and unrelated elements of experience. In short, we begin to ask: What are the cardinal principles which force us to assign a value to a particular mode of behavior?

As in other departments of philosophical thought, so here Plato has taught us the method for discovering the laws of valuation. The "Philebus" dialogue is an analysis of the concept of the good as applied to moral phenomena. The good is the purpose men conceive to underlie all their desires, judgments, and actions; it terminates upon an object which enshrines unique and relevant values. Two purposes alone satisfy the requirements of the case, so the debaters in the Academy said, either pleasure or intellectual achievement. One or the other must be accepted; both cannot be held. Cyrenaic and Cynic are the recognized opponents in the dispute. But the analysis so far made was superficial; Plato laid down the thesis that neither of these

purposes is the final good, but each in turn is of great service in making the good real. Each purpose contributes its peculiar values to the understanding and appreciation of the good life. Intellectual knowledge, for instance, can accumulate scientific data by the process of experiment and observation, as in the physics laboratory, but the data are empty and sterile if they cannot clarify an important theory or solve a difficult problem. Plato insists that knowledge of any sort has an ulterior end and obtains much of its value from the character of that end. The knowledge and art of the shipwright are of value because they enable him to build the desired ship. The rules of the mathematician are not bare formulas, symbols floating in an ideal space; they may be used either to determine the exact measurements of a given area or to construct a coherent system of numbers.¹ Certainly the methods and manners of logic (dialectic) must keep ever before them the concentrated end which Spinoza later espoused, namely, the making of a virtuous life. In every case, the act of body or mind points to a goal beyond the bounds of immediate behavior, an ideal value which men seek to obtain.

(a) If value attaches to every experienced object or situation, what is the nature of the attachment? Various answers have been proposed. Some aver that value is strictly subjective; it is the attitude of mind and nothing else; it belongs to the feeling-habitudes of the percipient. Hence, it changes from man to man; it varies concomitantly with the agent's education and social development. The fluctuation of fashions is a common illustration of the law. Not only do most minds violently resist the attempt to standardize the modes of dress, excluding thereby the taste and centrifugal initiative of the individual, but the love of change is one of the elements which forces upon the group a new fashion each succeeding season—all this despite the tyranny of social convention. The distinction of views and opinions is even more obvious in the region of æsthetic

¹ "Philebus," 156.

appreciation. What induces one set of artists to revel in the strange, bizarre figures of the Cubist canvas, while another group, equally well trained in the criteria of art, adhere to the accepted canons, seeking their inspiration in the work of men like Velasquez and Rembrandt? Or, within the same general area of choice, how can we account for the difference which makes the glowing symbolism of Shelley pleasing to one mind and the somewhat prosy meditations of Wordsworth agreeable to another? To come to our own field of study, what root-deviations of the moral sense allow two men to entertain opposite convictions on the subject of gambling, the first reprobating it in the strongest terms, the second finding in the element of chance a certain elation of mind, almost cognate to the mystic's trance? There can be but one answer to these questions: all values, we are advised, are subjective in their nature; they are personal, private, intimate, subject to no correlating canon. They do not characterize the object or event; they are undeflected expressions of soul. Hence, nothing can keep them from varying with each new percipient mind.

(b) The second theory holds that valuation is the acceptance of a property already resident in the object. Values, then, are "tertiary" qualities, like the primary and secondary qualities which Locke made famous. Shape, weight, motion, being primary qualities, are inherent in the object; color, sound, touch, and the like, emphasize the perceptual powers of the observer rather than the character of the object. Yet, to philosophical realism, both belong to the object, and at the same time both leave independent impressions on the mind. Thus, if a piece of silk has no capacity for reflecting the rays of light so that in successive moments it appears blue and green, there can be no sense data representing these two colors to consciousness. The two sets of qualities obey the same laws. Are the several forms of value also in the object? Professor Laird has no hesitation in answering "yes." He argues that "great art has a catholic and an abiding appeal" and that "the great epochs of beauty in art can almost always be appreciated by later

ages." And the reason for this is that "beauty is something that is judged, not something that is merely felt."² The trouble, then, does not lie in the objective reality of beauty but in the misdirected judgment that assumes to fix its values. Men do not go wrong, men do not disagree, when they have penetrated into the principles of æsthetic criticism. They may have different grounds for determining the structural harmony of a Phidian statue, but the essential values of color and form they cannot deny. The same line of argument will certify to the objectivity of moral values. To quote Laird again: "Every rule of conduct must be justified by the values it subserves." It is futile to ask whether "moral rules are universally binding;" we can only ask whether the proposed rule fulfills completely the purposes of the individual and the race. Thus, "suicide is a wanton destruction of value and therefore wrong; but if life must certainly be worse than death, then suicide is a duty."³ All this implies that the quality of goodness somehow inheres in the external situation and cannot with impunity be denied by the apprehending mind.

(c) Where lies the truth as between these two theories? We shall get at it best by detailing the several factors that go to make up the act of appreciation. What do we mean when we assert that John Smith has no moral scruples in playing the casino games at Monte Carlo? We mean, first, (i) that he is stimulated by a desire to determine whether his risk of certain monies will insure increased return. Coincident with the element of risk is the wish to outwit the other players and the "bank," both of which are constructively his opponents. If there be no desire, no inciting appetite, there will be no moral action. The nature of the desire is not arbitrary; it fits into the settled modes of private thought. The next factor (ii) is the object upon

² John Laird, "A Study in Realism," p. 129, *et seq.* But see G. E. Moore, "Philosophical Studies," Ch. 8, for another interpretation of "tertiary qualities."

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 142, 143.

which the desire terminates, here the increment of gold. To be sure, some disingenuous participants in the game tell us that their purpose is the satisfaction of the temperamental love of adventure. They are mistaken, sometimes intentionally mistaken. The plea is a cover to the implied charge that gambling is a dishonest enterprise. Again, (iii) in connecting desire and object a specific judgment is made: "the game is valuable to me as the source of revenue." The judgment is more than a statement of reality; it is an expression of value; it tells what *goods* I hope to obtain by the proposed act. Finally, (iv) the entire transaction is surrounded by a penumbra of emotional strain, greater, perhaps, in proportion to the nervous attitude of the player. It provokes new and more intense reactions with each succeeding defeat at the board. Some of the moral danger lies in this sector of the situation.

But the fundamental moral error consists in the wrong association of external events. Risk, adventure, has its intellectual worth; but risk when heedlessly taken destroys the natural laws of equivalence—here the transfer of money when no just return is made. This cuts athwart the established order of nature, especially the order of social exchange, where men stand ready (or should so stand) to administer exact desert to every agent. There is, then, a point of great merit in Durkheim's claim that the objective moral principles are found in the social formulas of conduct as worked out in the common habits of the group.⁴ But the clear issue of the argument is that values are both subjective and objective, inner and outer, and that only by a satisfactory adjustment of the two can we reach a strictly logical judgment of moral duty. Since the same process must be followed in the detection of æsthetic beauty and religious truth, we may conclude that value is the due proportion between the constitutive properties of the object and the appreciating powers of the mind.

⁴ E. Durkheim, "Les jugements de valeur et les jugements de réalité," in *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 1911.

2. Two Aspects of Value, Constitutive and Contributory.

We have now defined the locus of value and therewith its general meaning. The next question is: Does value have always the same persistent reference? The study of the question as a philosophical problem is of recent date, and the term has not had time to harden into a rigid formula.⁵ But, at any rate, value seems to exhibit two distinct aspects, constitutive and contributory, intrinsic and instrumental, and these we shall examine in turn.

(a) Does value have a significance peculiar to itself? And if so, what? The simplest answer is that it yields a modicum of pleasure. The reading of a book, for example, Meredith's "Vittoria," arouses the keenest excitement, an ecstasy of feeling which seems to express most fully its first and preponderating value.⁶ The argument in favor of the idea has a conclusive note. We are obliged to set up a common measure, a measure that can be applied to every object and event, and which can at the same time determine the relative degree of value in competing cases. What, for example, is the common denominator of choice when we compare values in a career of intellectual effort like a scientist's and the career of a man who exploits a new and virgin country for purposes of pecuniary gain? The calculus of values depends solely on the amount of pleasure obtained; another measure is arbitrary and unworkable. For pleasure is the gratification of taste, and no dispute about the authority of taste is allowed. Hence, we may say without reserve "I delight to look upon this picture, since it conforms to my taste in art."

But is this the ultimate and constitutive basis of value? A mere negation, such as the Cynics of Greece gave, is not an adequate answer. The historical testimony is that some things have necessary values when they do not please. Thus, the hard discipline of physical and mental powers to which youth is subjected in well-organized communities has an intrinsic value of no mean sort. Muscular strength depends

⁵ Cf. C. von Ehrenfels, "System der Werttheorie." 1897.

⁶ Cf. S. Alexander, "Lecture on *Æsthetics*."

on severe and unremittent exercise. Strength is not outside the sphere of natural endowments; it is their proper expression. Hence, the painful process which develops it is the simon-pure method for realizing its functional values. Feeling, whether of pain or pleasure, springs from the discharge of a function which is the same as desire; that is to say, the true psychology of value begins with desire. What a man desires is what gives value to experience. The scientific mind cannot find satisfaction in the accumulation of material goods; it demands acquaintance with the atomic structure of the world, with the variegated types of organized bodies, with the changing behavior of the human personality. The captain of industry, on the other hand, construes the treasures of nature in terms of the law of supply and demand. The finer points of scientific theory are without value to him. Hence, whatever represents and elicits the content of desire may be said to have constitutive value to the agent. Even in the field of economics, as Durkheim and his school have argued, economic values always involve ideal relations. Not work as the output of physical force, but work that produces desired commodities is the true subject of value.⁷

Still more impressive is the evidence on the level of moral transactions. Here the interplay of minds apart from the pursuit of material ends is the source and guaranty of values. Aristotle has enlarged upon the importance of friendship in the acquisition of culture. He points to the simple axiom that the exchange of regard and affection can be based upon but one rule of value, namely, that each party to the contract has the same resources of intellect and estate as the other.⁸ The moment one man rises to a level of economic advantage or intellectual equipment not enjoyed by the other, a difference of relationship is at once instituted. Equality is the cardinal law of friendship; without it there must be two standards of judgment, and no agreement can be had. If it is hard for the rich man to enter

⁷ Bouglé, "Evolution of Values," trans. by H. S. Sellars, p. 92.

⁸ "Ethics," Bk. VIII, Ch. 10.

the kingdom of heaven, it is *pro tanto* hard for him to engage in congenial intercourse with his impecunious neighbor. He desires to extend financial aid; but to put a man in your debt, either in gold or ideas, is to set a lofty partition between two spirits, which no professions of friendship can level. Hence, in the superfine camaraderie which Plato threw about the guardians of the state, all barriers to intellectual and economic equality were removed. The currency of the moral realm is ideas, and desire represents man's efforts to translate ideas into the modes of virtuous conduct.

(b) The first function of value is constitutive; it shows how desire is immediately affiliated with its object. In morals, desire is the essence of character; hence, the end or aim as expressed in a moral act is the direct reflection of a man's traits of character; it is the moral self in operation corresponding to the expression of the æsthetic self in our admiration of the glowing sunset. The primary value of any object is my private appropriation of its meaning. But, says Bossuet, "there is no power which does not serve, in spite of itself, other designs than its own."⁹ Value is also contributory, instrumental. The achievement of a given end means the fulfillment of other desires, tendencies, ideas. We may not disregard the separate links in the chain we are forging. Thus, the simple dance that delights the senses of primitive peoples has a double value-relation. It not only gives outlet to their love of rhythm and coördinated movement, but it awakens the associative instinct as embodied in the desire for admiration and companionship. In the same way, economic values are of two kinds. Gold is the medium for the registration of the appetite for ownership; it is also a cause, since it enables us to acquire other utilities; it is the potential symbol of education, culture, moral conquest, and even religious faith. "Human welfare requires the addition of external goods; for it is impossible, or at least difficult, for a person to do what is noble unless he is

⁹ Quoted by Bouglé, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

furnished with external means.”¹⁰ Modern writers may modify the harshness of the sentiment, but all admit the extreme moral hazards faced by individual or community if on the brink of starvation.

It seems to be agreed in elementary experience that values are both constitutive and contributory, that desires cannot be pursued in active endeavor without leaving their imprint indelibly on their normal consequences. The rule holds good on the lower levels of action; does it apply in the region of the finer sensibilities? Does the nature of the desire color the moral values of residual behavior? Examples press upon us from every side. The young man is confronted with the problem of deciding the direction of his future career. He desires to enter a profession, say, law or medicine. Many years of preparation are required under the approved principle that only a trained mind is fit to assume the responsibilities. How shall he fulfill his desire? If, as often happens, his parents and friends are unable to provide adequately for his support, he must address himself to the strenuous task of collecting his own funds. Sacrifice of many ordinary pleasures must be accepted. The path is thorny and the ascent arduous, but the ultimate goal as prefigured to his fancy seems to soften the preliminary hardships by the glow of his hope. The axiom is universal: the prevailing aim, the desire with which a man associates his inner self, gives the true moral tone to every abnegatory measure. It is this axiom that Kant had in mind when he placed a qualification to his celebrated Second Maxim: “Treat humanity whether in thine own person or that of any other as an End, *never as means only*.” In certain circumstances, every moral agent is justified in converting his own person into an instrument of value for the attainment of the good. The martyr who welcomes the stake as the symbol of fidelity, the soldier who braves the withering fire of the enemy in defense of his solemn oath, the scientist in the jungles of Africa who searches for the cause of yellow fever and dies

¹⁰ Aristotle, “Ethics,” Bk. I, Ch. 9.

in his search,¹¹ the humble citizen pursuing his common task without public applause—these have possessed themselves of the far-lying values which spring from the constitutive desire to do one's duty.

At this point, a question of grave import must be considered. Suppose that the contributory values turn out to be negative, the index of results being unfavorable. What then? Sacrifice is generally approved if the end is gained without harm to body or mind. Can we assign to it the same merit in case the consequences embrace the encumbrance of an enervated body and even a fluctuating power of will? The halo of early devotion may gild the road when professional endeavors begin. But the practical student of moral values must canvass every phase of the perplexing problem, weigh with care every element in the teleological series, in order to reach a coherent solution. One fact stands clearly before his mind: means and end form a single whole; one cannot be determined without the other. Particularly is this rule to be applied when the means proposed are admittedly wrong in themselves and cannot be transformed into positive values by the jugglery of prudential logic. The Machiavellian formula "the end justifies the means" has no support in the economy of morals.¹² The formula is seductive in tone; it has been used to vindicate some of the most hideous crimes in history; but it bears on its surface a half truth, while the fundamental truth is concealed. The half truth is the proposed end, which is merely secondary, and never to be pursued if it conflicts with the primary truth. Thus, the Spanish Inquisition was the means for gaining a secondary end, the preservation of the integrity of the church. When this end conflicted with the rights of human life and the promotion of social culture, its moral authority was canceled. The principle is plain: nothing but

¹¹ *Science*, May 25, 1928, says: "Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, died on May 21 in Africa from yellow fever, which he contracted while working on the disease."

¹² Cf. Pt. II, Ch. 1.

positive values can be obtained from the operation of a truly moral desire.

3. Two Levels of Value, Law and Principle.

We have persistently assumed that values, while inherently the same in quality, occupy different levels in the development of human character. We have also assumed that, by dint of adjustment to his social environment, there has been awakened in man's mind a sense of moral obligation distinct from and paramount to all other possible values. Conscience is not only the highest point in the judging process of mind; it is also the authoritative director of all forms of conduct. The extent of this guiding power will be studied at length under the caption of the "Sanctions of Ethics." It is our purpose here to define the two compensating types of value corresponding in general to the systematic division of desires.¹³

(a) The first level embraces the organic properties of mankind. The physical needs, the sensory appetitions, the instinctive tendencies to action, have their own peculiar and imperative canons of value. What are these canons? They are logical in form, but none the less real. They depend upon the elementary fact that we are obliged to deal on this level with a physico-chemical structure, the body, in its relations to other structures of a similar sort. It is true that mind gathers up and unites the diverse and incoherent responses which body makes to its stimuli. It is also true that the central mind, converted into a self, insists on interpreting the correlated responses in accordance with established habits. Mind, at the start, is the servant of body and wins its command over most reactions solely by understanding how they arise and what they can do. Thus, the value of the primitive act of eating lies in its power to quell the pangs of hunger. When this relation is understood, the mastery of body by mind begins. What is this relation? The relation is

¹³ Cf. *supra*, Ch. IV.

primarily physical—an irritated nervous system, an object that may allay its pains, a muscular effort to grasp and assimilate the object. It is essentially an impact of bodies, an exertion of force, a discharge of electromagnetic energy. But behind the body is the mind, which not only directs but understands. Hence, the relation is not a hit-or-miss impact; it is uniform, it is capable of being repeated under difficult conditions, it is even the subject of prediction. To state it shortly, the values we are analyzing are the values of law. Because our responses are readily organized into permanent types, human life becomes regular, adjusts itself to recurring seasons, meets sudden changes in temperature without alarm. Law is the guardian of physical well-being.

Law exercises similar authority in the wider areas of organic experience. Thus, political economy assumes the existence of staple desires, steady currents of demand, without which a social organization would be impossible. It is these desires which give character to economic goods; otherwise, they are mere brute substances. Wheat and cotton and wool obtain their values from the settled modes of action common to the race. Natural prudence would seem to dictate the adoption of a law of production which keeps in view the ratios of expected demand. The relation is extremely subtle, but so is every process of law, and law cannot be formulated without the most searching analysis of all the factors involved.

The perplexity grows greater when specifically moral distinctions emerge. Caveats and positive commands dog the steps of economic habits. Government interferes with its social programs, sometimes for the benefit of the many, sometimes for the enrichment of the few. Public authority slowly comes to grips with the destructive forces of selfishness, as expressed in tariff laws, uncontrolled corporations, monopoly in the necessities of life. Problems of the most intimate sort are set for solution; for instance, whether men of power in the ranks of finance shall go scot-free when charged with fraudulently exploiting resources belonging to the nation at large; whether education shall depend solely

on the affluence or impecuniousness of a given state, the degree of intellectual training being gauged only by what money can buy. Problems such as these must be examined in the light of the approximate laws of justice which society has found itself competent to formulate. In almost every case, the criterion of judgment is ultimately a matter of compromise—"muddling through." Civil law has none of the inflexibility of natural force; it is imposed by a governing body and is therefore subject to change. Every value determined under its rubric must be regarded as tentative, referable to conditions, hinting at future revision when new knowledge is obtained. This is the first and lower level of moral relations.

(b) When we ascend to the second level, a new mode of judgment is required. The calculation of consequences has no merit here. A law which is effective for one group but not for another has no constitutive value. A law which must be altered to suit a new economic situation cannot be a reflection of a man's permanent character. The true criteria of value are universality and necessity, as Kant clearly discerned. Hence, we must determine all judgments by principle, the *first* thoughts of the mind. What, for example, do we mean by the value of religion? Its finer significance lies in the principle of authority; the realization that above and beyond the actions of the individual stands the invincible scepter of "must" and "ought." Man cannot proceed as though he were the single power qualified to give commands to others and receive obedience from them. In primitive society, even the admitted chief recognizes the dominance of a non-human superior will which bears the ægis of authority—the rolling thunder, the flashing lightning, the roaring torrent, the rising sap in the emblematic tree. In cultivated communities, the transcendent Deity becomes the "moral Governor" of the universe, whose movements partake of the solemn splendor of conscience, the righteous God expecting righteous conduct from his votaries. Combining these diverse religious values, Kant acknowledges the reign of two imperial sovereigns, the starry heavens

above and the categorical imperative within. Morals and religion are united.

Similarly, æsthetics, the science of beauty, stirs the mind to the apprehension of a different aspect of truth. Beauty is, for Plato, the equivalent of love, the vigorous attraction of the soul to the harmonies of nature. By some magic thrust, two minds of totally diverse training find a common impulse in the exquisite colors of the flower, the rhythmic currents of the wind, the striated markings of the primeval rocks, or in the symmetrical swing of the native dance, the lights and shadows of Gothic arches, the melodious cadences of Homeric poems as recited by an inspired interpreter. These give promise of concerted loyalty to a still higher impulse, the idea of moral freedom, the earnest adoption of a new choice which may lead to pain, perhaps momentary defeat, but never to the edge of despair.

Still further, the stern necessities of logic contribute their values to the determination of moral character. Logic is the fulcrum of experience. It lifted Greek ethics from the risks and accidents of chance thinking to a lofty plane of scientific endeavor, which has been the model for all future generations. Thus, in the "Phædrus" dialogue, Plato compares the "empiric" medicine man who "fumbled in the dark" with the trained medical expert who knows the structure and functions of the human body and can prescribe homogeneous remedies for its several ailments. Again, he portrays the literary rhetorician with his plausible nostrums for the ills of the state; and by his side he places the skilled orator like Pericles, who studied the peculiar temperament of his hearers, diagnosed their emotional symptoms, and fitted the discourse to their needs.¹⁴ Both exalt the effectiveness of logical analysis because both have learned the organic principles of their art. Both, also, consciously betray the intimate relation between logic and the pursuit of moral ends. No student of the "active principles" of mind, as

¹⁴ Cf. A. E. Taylor, "Plato," p. 304, *et seq.*

Butler calls them, can fail to see that conduct, which is "three-fourths of life," requires the use of logical methods for its systematic development.

4. The Judgment of Value.

The experience of every agent proceeds upon one or both of these levels, law and principle. The point with which ethics is concerned is, which of these values suits the particular type of character we propose to create? In order to arrive at a decision, we are obliged to consider the form of the value-judgment. It is quite possible to assume a disinterested attitude, an intellectual method of approach, where we impersonally weigh the elements that enter into a new experience. Thus, Faust is represented as having tasted the fruits of sensual pleasure and sounded the depths of scientific knowledge in quest of peace of mind—in vain. He then turns to a broader program and agrees to adopt the formula of social welfare as the sole sufficient aim of moral effort. This is a judgment of value, but it is abstract, general, without the sting of obligation that sinks deep into the body of practical experience.¹⁵ Obviously, we must have logical acquaintance with the structure of the Self and know how that structure is to be maintained. But so long as the judgment is merely a rehearsal of principles, no true moral action can result. The value-judgment by itself gives no impetus to the will; it is simply an ingenious drama played before the logical fancy. On the other hand, a concrete situation, an obligatory summons to meet it, a motive behind the act, and an explicit understanding of its consequences—these convert the abstract judgment into an intelligible fact of moral behavior. In brief, the practical judgment is a choice between conflicting interests and competing values dictated by the kind of self which stands behind the judging mind.

¹⁵ *Supra*, Ch. VII.

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PART II

THE METHODS OF ETHICS

CHAPTER I

EGOCENTRIC HEDONISM

Are we justified in formulating a theory for the explanation of moral phenomena? Or shall we assume that conduct is a succession of unrelated feelings and endeavors which are directed by some happy intuition, no law of conduct being ascertainable? History has voted with great emphasis for the former proposal, and we therefore have before us several finely articulated systems, appealing alike to logic and the æsthetic love of symmetry. If a theory is to be successful in any sphere of inquiry, it must present at least the four facets of truth that J. S. Mill has described at length.¹ It must deal with objective facts; it must be able to establish a relation of similarity between them; it must set them down in a series discernible both in space and time; and it must exhibit some sort of causal nexus between appropriate parts of the series. The analysis of psychological materials which we have just completed may convince the candid reader that the necessary facts are at hand. They await a comprehensive interpretation.

But interpretation cannot depend on the chance opinion of a naïve observer. The suggestion of the Cambridge Platonists, misreading altogether the nature of Plato's Ideas—that intuition can penetrate at once into the substance of a virtuous act—is without foundation in experience. It is built upon a grossly inaccurate psychology. To interpret is to describe. Hence, the group of facts which we have assembled require what we have ventured to call a scientific treatment. If Mill is right in applying this formidable term to the fluctuating sequences of thought—not fear-

¹ "System of Logic," Bk. III, Ch. 24.

ing even to test its validity by the method of prediction²—, then we may hide away our diffidence and hesitation and boldly seek a critical theory of explanation. For our own part, we have stated briefly the methods of science that men have used and will continue to use in analyzing the motives and modes of behavior. We have assumed that the four requirements of a true theory are satisfied by the kind of materials assembled, and we shall now proceed to organize the facts into a working hypothesis.

It is important at the outset to examine the theories that have engaged men's attention, especially the two antithetical types, Hedonism and Rationalism. The plan we propose to follow is to state each theory in its historical development, give in detail the objections that seem to nullify its force, cull from it the factors we deem to possess permanent value, compare the residual concepts with the given materials, and on the basis of the synthetic principle attempt a solution of some of the major problems of experience. We begin with the theory of Hedonism.

Hedonism affirms that all moral action is to be judged by the amount of pleasure enjoyed by the individual or the group. The term is derived from a Greek root (ἡδονή), which signifies refreshment of feelings, a heightened sensation, a thrill of delight. It was at an early date distinguished from an intellectual appreciation of the meaning of the act. Pleasure and pain are the most conspicuous and universal elements in all experience. (i) They are positive and real concomitants of behavior. We cannot be sure that the mind has conceived and persuaded us to adopt a given course of conduct; nor can we be sure that our private will has equipped us with the energy to perform a specific task. But every action terminates either in pleasure or pain, the cases of indifferent feeling being negligible. If it be pleasure, then we conclude that the deed is good; if it be pain, we make the opposite judgment. The reality of the feeling and its test of moral worth are both clear to the mind.

² *Ibid.*, Bk. VI, Ch. 2.

Furthermore (ii), we are sustained in this opinion by the universality of the feeling. It is not confined to a single era in a man's life nor to any privileged race or class nor to a definite level in the development of social character. Here is a note to which every human being can make response—the child or the instructed adult, the savage or the citizen of the cultured state. The loss of pleasure, that is, the intrusion of pain, brings a determinate protest without effort on our part, often against our wish. The shrill cry of the infant, the blanched face or knitted brow of the man, bear eloquent witness to the momentary painfulness of feeling. On the other hand, the flashing eye, the luminous features of the face, reveal the elation of sensibility which we call pleasure. It is futile to seek a more subtle test of goodness. The strained dialectics of the theorist are out of place. Nature has provided the one certain criterion for moral values.

Still again (iii), pleasure lends itself to objective calculation. You can tell with precision whether you enjoy the opera or the Spanish bullfight, whether you prefer the exhilaration of wine or the steady hand of abstinence. You can contrast the pleasing extravagances of youth with the calm satisfactions of middle life. It is obvious that violence is not the true measure of enjoyment; the computation must be made from another angle. Not intensity but amount would seem to be the practical standard; this gives us an honest and registrable result. We can thus figure out our duty as accurately as a problem in mathematics; John Locke argued. Feeling is the one human value—so this school maintains—that satisfies completely the requirements of a scientific explanation. Hedonism is the valid theory of conduct.

We shall reserve our criticism of the case until the evidence has all been assembled, and we shall assemble the evidence by studying four representative solutions of the Egocentric problem in this chapter, to be followed by an analysis of historic Utilitarianism.

1. The Cyrenaic Solution—Pleasure Is Physical and Individual.

The Hedonistic formula was first laid down by Aristippus of Cyrene (b. 435 B.C.), a disciple of Socrates. Changes were made from time to time in the substance of the doctrine, but its primary principles remained the same. The quest was for a *summum bonum*, the chief end of moral action. The Socratic debates left the question open, but Aristippus proceeded to settle it. Man's dominating aim is pleasure, and pleasure means the present feelings of the body. This is the one fact we know; past sensations are gone, future experiences are beyond the range of calculation. The philosophy of Protagoras showed that knowledge is immediate perception, and the logical worth of the image is attested by the pleasure or pain ensuing. Man has no way of establishing similarities between percepts and memory images; nor can he compare the current feeling with one already lapsed. We must not try to peer into the future and judge the value of present behavior by achievements lying far ahead. The formula of Horace is convincing,—*carpe diem*—seize the good now within reach, and that good is the reigning pleasure. It is the uncertain counsel of folly to forego present enjoyment in hope of a greater one later on; to endure the bitter torment of pain as the medium of expected good is absurd. Immediate pleasure is the test of goodness. The second canon deals with the kind of object which produces gratification. Here Aristippus does not mince words; there is but one object that complies with the terms of the problem. Pleasure cannot be derived from the contemplation of our ideals, for these are simply continuations of sense perceptions. The mind's delight in memories hinges not upon their contents but on the feelings hitherto aroused. The one source of pleasure is the body. The so-called "goods" of Greek ethics are means to the end, not the end itself. "Wealth is the efficient cause of enjoyment, but it is not desirable in itself."³ Even prudence, the most practical

³ Diogenes Laertius, Bohn edition, pp. 471, 472.

of the virtues, is an instrument to attain the good. The final test is negative: What do men most strenuously avoid? Is it imprudence, ignorance, poverty, slavery? It is none of these—it is pain, and pain of body is the only kind we actually know. If pain of body is to be avoided, bodily pleasures are to be zealously sought. Hence, what seems to many an excess of indulgence, in wine or carnal love, is to Aristippus the correct mode of registering moral habits. Yet even in this extreme form of Egoism, rational control is instituted. "I possess pleasure," says the Hedonist; "I am not possessed by it." There is an *ultima Thule*, a farthest border, beyond which the voluptuary may not pass. The counsel of Socrates has not gone unheeded.

Finally, the wise man cannot consider any other person as of equal importance with himself, but he can use others for his own benefit. The contrast with the Kantian ethics is very striking. These two creeds stand at antithetical extremes in their treatment of the principles of selfhood. The choice of pleasures concerns the demands of the percipient alone; the desires and rights of the group are utterly foreign to him. The State is a necessary instrument for the curbing of natural instincts which, if left to themselves, might do serious damage to my individual interests. But the common customs of society with their hypocritical sophistries need not be observed if they conflict with my private desires. The one irresistible imperative is the cry of passion. I am not obliged to ask whether the satisfaction of my wants will interfere with other men's needs; I do not and cannot know what their needs are. I have a hint here or there when the sanctions of the group begin to operate. But even then I can fall back upon the Greek principle of balance, and thus escape any private hurt. The scheme of life is strictly egocentric.

2. The Epicurean Solution—Pleasure Is Mental and Sympathetic.

The crudities of the Cyrenaic solution began to disappear under the sharp criticism of the Socratic school. The new

Hedonism was embodied in the person and teachings of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) Epicurus was trained in the rigid concepts of Democritean naturalism, having accepted the dogma that the world is the seat of necessary mechanical forces. He was prepared, then, to agree with Aristippus respecting the primary aim of conduct. But pleasure cannot be regarded as a positive good; it is really the cessation of pain, whose sting, since pain is everywhere regarded as evil, it is our first duty to silence. Now the motions of sensation are continuous; hence, there are alternations of pleasure and pain—nothing stable, nothing sure—if we confine our attention to physical feeling. Good must lie beyond the functions of body; it must reside in the perceptions of the mind. Thus only can it acquire the calm and repose that come with the disregard of fluctuating affections. Thus only can we enter into a state of mind which enables the sage to endure physical tortures of a most excruciating sort, which teaches him to despise the hatreds and competitions of common society, and which makes the arts of the tyrant and the sensualist repugnant to his finer feelings. The pains of body being annulled, delight becomes positive in character, fed by the streams of philosophic reflection and cheered by the growing remoteness of insinuating pains.

It results, of necessity, that true pleasure is not a momentary experience, as the Cyrenaics thought, but the modulus of a settled habit. Epicurus' doctrine may, at this point, be traced to the broad theory of the universe which he inherited from Democritus. The world is composed of an infinite number of atoms, varied in shape and falling vertically toward a common plane. The atom itself is purely quantitative in structure, unperceptual, antispiritual. Epicurus takes the atom and adds a new constitutive property, an internal power which can of itself deflect the natural course of matter agreeably to our concept of gravity. He then endows the soul with a similar tendency, an assertive will, a free determination of choice, which gives to man's behavior the color of moral responsibility. While the soul accepts pleasure as the ultimate good, in its choice it is

independent of the *kind* of pleasure to be sought. Virtue is an instrument which we voluntarily adopt as a means to the end. The making of one's destiny is in one's own hands. No hidden or demonic arts, no fear of invisible enemies, can distract our attention. Even death, the dread specter lurking in the shadow for every healthy Greek, cannot longer imperil the peace of mind; for "when we are living there is no death, and when we die there is no existence." We may, therefore, cultivate the posture of imperturbability, the true index of philosophic triumph. Thus does the story run. But a nearer scrutiny of the case proves that the Epicurean will is a mere simulacrum; no man can be free in a mechanically controlled world. If the parallel between the soul and the atom be exact, if the atom be guided by the unthinking tendency within, then pleasure is not a conceived and chosen end but a necessary terminus to every sentient action, and freedom of choice is abolished.

But let us examine one further contention in the system of Epicurus, namely, that virtue and happiness are identical. He assents to the dictum of Aristippus that prudence is an essential factor in the choice of pleasure. Certainly, prudence has always selected the congenial relations of the social group as the most competent to bear the magnetic charge of personal delight. "Of all the things which wisdom provides for the happiness of a lifetime, by far the greatest is friendship."⁴ The warmth of affection, the charm of fellowship, the exchange of noble thoughts, these are the safeguards of virtue and the incentives to private action. Friendship must be free from the slightest tinge of pain. The friend is a man's *alter ego*, not an independent personality. He can elicit, as Schiller said to Goethe, the profound passions, ideas, aspirations, that could not come to the surface without adequate stimulus. Friendship is required for full mental growth, for true moral maturity. We can do without incentive to wealth, to political power, to posthumous fame; we cannot do without the analytic touch of a

⁴ Cicero, "De Officiis," Bk. I, 20, 65.

friendly mind. The egoism of Epicurus is more refined than the egoism of Aristippus; it has gone from body to spirit, from the solitary spirit to the company of kindred minds. To be sure, the broad sympathies of the modern social state are beyond his grasp; he sits in his Garden surrounded by men who know his will and follow it. But, at least, the scepter of Hedonism has passed from the tyranny of the flesh to the mellow mastery of the mind.

3. The Solution of Machiavelli—Principle of Self-Interest.

It is written on the tomb of Machiavelli that no praise is equal to so great a name. Opinions have varied as to the worth of his achievements and the significance of his teachings. Some critics have held that the dogmas of "The Prince" were merely reflections of the current aphorisms of the day; he cited them only to refute them. His one aim was the unification of Italy, and the deceit he appeared to recommend was a fair sample of the practices he hoped to overcome, once the state was organized: The long judgment of history, however, has not been favorable to him; he not only taught what he saw men doing, but himself practiced what he taught. His tenets, couched in most ingratiating language, have molded the conscious theory of many influential writers, such as Hobbes, Voltaire, Schopenhauer. The intrigues of Catherine de Medici, the massacres of St. Bartholomew, the excesses of Henry VIII of England, the assaults of the Duke of Alva on the liberties of the Netherlands, have been traced to Machiavelli and his "Prince." Literature has been blighted, it is said, by his malign touch:

I count religion but a childish toy,
And hold there is no sin but ignorance.⁵

Altogether, both scorn and fear have been excited by his name, and if no fit epitaph may be conceived to signalize his

⁵ Marlowe, "The Jew of Malta," *Introd.*

talents, it is in part due to men's repugnance to his person and his words.

(a) The logic which the philosophy of naïve realism calls for is strictly inductive. We must begin with facts, the way men act, and study the values which they have set upon the facts. Ethics is thus an empirical science; it "faces the realities of the situation," as Machiavelli himself says. The hard rule of necessity is applied in every decision; feeling and reasoned argument are excluded. What are the facts? They seem to fall into two classes. The first includes the actual deeds of mankind. It is the hope of moralists to order a society where nothing but virtue abounds. The hope is vain. A viceless man would be a monster. Certain vicious habits are essential to character; it is only when we think that they might impair the total strength of the man that we insist on their removal. No quality should be eliminated which would reduce the subject to a condition of self-depreciation. For example, the tendency of sympathetic treatment in some cases makes men conceive a certain indulgence of their own shortcomings. In other cases, the tendency is to lift the subject's esteem of himself until he may even seem to be superior to his advisor. But the mailed hand is better than the velvet glove, as a general rule, and this is the counsel Machiavelli gives to his Prince. Especially is there need for stern measures in the visiting of revenge. Revenge is often accounted a sinful emotion which is to be rigidly excluded from the practice of moral societies. But revenge is the answer which nature gives to the imposition of pain, and, while it may be privately "sweet," it is also in accord with the maintenance of true order in the group.

These human facts are objective, but they do not stand alone. The structure of nature with which the human body is associated bears the imprint of the same laws. "Nature is red in tooth and claw:" the revelations of modern science are not required to prove the truth of the judgment of Tennyson. Man must defend himself against the brute, and in doing so he must adopt the weapons of the brute. Hence,

Cæsar Borgia is the true type of the naturally moral man. "The beast of prey and the man of prey are fundamentally misunderstood," exclaims Nietzsche; "nature herself is misunderstood if one seeks only a morbid quality in the constitution of the healthiest of tropic monsters and growths."⁶ Morals, as men have pursued them, tend to make the moral agent timid. True morals carry a man back to his sovereign rights as lord of the forest and the herd. We must conclude that "war is just when necessary, and the resort to arms is beneficent when there is hope in nothing else."⁷ In fine, necessity is morality, and the maxim of the philosophy is, "Necessity knows no law." This is the Moral Realism that issued from the brain of the Florentine.

(b) Success is the primary aim of the moral agent, and success means the promotion of the interests of self. What are the mental qualifications required? There is first an aggressive and concentrated purpose that does not falter before the difficult tasks confronting it. Borgia is again an "example to others," with his perseverance, his foresight, his power to dissemble his feelings. We must be careful to separate the fortuitous from the intrinsic properties, that is, the existing conditions from the man's character. It is the quality of character that ultimately counts; the native stubborn strength of mind and body. It is such a man as this who knows his own interest and proceeds to secure it. To this, we must add the ability to withstand the rebuffs of time and persons. Since the moral program is a *Realethik*, a program that considers things as they are, not as we think they ought to be, we must remember that people are ultimately won by some kind of reward. They are subject to a price, frequently a stated price. The particular price which most men will be obliged to pay is a state of fear. Fear is a tremendous lever in the pursuit of moral values; it "holds by the apprehension of punishment." Hence, the successful man will build up a reputation for hard and stern

⁶ "Beyond Good and Evil," trans. by Helen Zimmern, p. 118.

⁷ "The Prince," Ch. 26.

dealings. Reputation counts in the long run; it is not what a man really in his heart is, but what he can coerce others into believing that he is, that makes him influential. This is the same as moral goodness. In the course of his progress towards success, it may be essential to concede certain ends, for example, one's religious beliefs. It does no harm to go with the group in these matters, provided the desired result is accomplished. Hence, Machiavelli lays down the general rule that virtue has no inner or absolute value; it takes its color and form from the conditions that gave it birth.⁸

(c) If the end of all action is the satisfaction of private interests, what will be the appropriate means for attaining it? The members of the Utilitarian school are not at one on the subject. Sidgwick argues that the end must not be secondary if it is to be the basis of moral judgment—"not the preservation of a particular state . . . but the happiness of humanity."⁹ It is not within the scope of his doctrine to hold that the secondary end could justify any means whatsoever, and he flatly denies that it can do so. "The Prince," on the other hand, has a totally different interpretation. If the end, to wit, the maintenance of my own interests, be accepted as the guiding principle of morals, then the familiar formula "the end justifies the means" follows as a matter of course. In fact, we need but to inspect the records of history to find how success has been won. There are always two instruments, force and craft, which enable men to make their end synonymous with goodness. Savonarola failed to prove his virtue as a proponent of religious dissent because he had no army to support his claims. His amazing eloquence, his fiery invectives, his intrepid courage, brought no determinate results. That being true, he should have contrived to summon the emblems of force to his help or else have given up the crusade.¹⁰ The egoist must think only of himself; he must not put himself in the path of retribution, for, as sure as fate, the pendulum returns in

⁸ "The Prince," Ch. 18.

⁹ "Practical Ethics," p. 63.

¹⁰ Machiavelli, "Livy," III, 30.

the arc of its swing and shatters him who has not adjusted his course to the new situation. Compromise is thus the essence of true virtue. Henry of Navarre stands as a brilliant example of adjustment. He could sit "easy" with his conscience, since conscience meant the attainment of political success. This is the attitude of all practical politicians: "Defend your country by glory, if the way be open; otherwise by the instruments of shame."¹¹ Obviously, under such a moral régime the canons of behavior are few and simple, and he will best succeed who pays closest attention to the veerings of the wind. It would seem that a serious refutation of the Machiavellian creed need not be undertaken in this volume.

4. The Solution of Hobbes—Self-Interest as Power and Preservation.

The first modern exponent of the Hedonistic formula is Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). Few men in the history of British thought have excited such bitter hostilities among contemporaries or successors. He lived in a critical period of political development, when kingship was proven to be an ephemeral expedient and a radical change of government not beyond the range of possibility. In the threatened rupture of social traditions, his extreme views on morals would seem to us to possess peculiar logical pertinence; to the men of his own time, they spelled religious blasphemy and civil anarchy.

We are confronted at once with a revised definition of pleasure. The Epicurean principle is insufficient. In order to get his point of approach, we must study the psychological assumptions. The universe presents to the unbiased eye a single phenomenon of unquestioned reality: Motion is everywhere present and everywhere unceasing. The mind of man can be no exception. If the vital functions of the body, circulation of the blood, respiration, digestion, are forms of motion, then sensation, perception, and imagina-

¹¹ *Ibid.*, III, 41.

tion must be likewise. Every mental response requires an external stimulus; every endeavor, such as walking, speaking, striking, exhibits its force by kinæsthetic movement. Since each action is invariably accompanied by some degree of pleasure or pain, it seems to Hobbes that feeling and appetite are identical.¹² The objects that stimulate desire would, if obtained, lead to happiness. Hence, he finds himself in a position to conclude that the true aim of all conduct is the quest for pleasure. Present-day critics have denied him a place in the school of Hedonism, but without reason, as a glance at the following sentence will show: "Men differ very much in the constitution of the body; whereby that which helpeth and furthereth *vital* constitution in one, and is therefore delightful, hindereth and crosseth it in another, and therefore causeth grief."¹³ If the law here cited seems to anticipate the contentions of Herbert Spencer, we need not complain. Spencer accepts the name of Hedonist without reserve; Hobbes never fails to insist that good as the end desired is jocund, delightful. Men have but one purpose, to seize pleasure and avert pain. How shall the purpose be realized?

There are two methods which he urges upon his readers. The first is the assertion of power. "Every man by nature hath a right to all things, that is to say, to do whatsoever he listeth to him he listeth."¹⁴ Such a claim is based on the idea of human equality—in body, experience, reason, passion; for, whatever be the types of action as individually developed, the basic properties are the same. If men were not equal, it is just possible that the preying of the strong on the weak might become sensibly repugnant. But no inner compunctions can restrain the man of nature who is on equal terms of combat with every other member of the race. The program here laid down is singularly like that of the Italian thinker. Since pleasure is especially emphatic in the gratification of sentiment or passion, we may study the

¹² "Leviathan," Ch. 6.

¹³ "Human Nature," Ch. 10.

¹⁴ "De Corpore Politico," Pt. I, Ch. 1.

course of experience there. The affection of the parent for his child is the natural tendency to "assist those that adhere" to us, the assumption being that, when loyalty is withdrawn, parental affection follows. The story is too painfully true to require detailed exposition. Pity for a man in trouble suggests that we are moved by the insinuating thought that a similar catastrophe may be visited upon our unoffending heads. Love is the obverse side of need; we love none but those who can satisfy the desires of body and mind. We may therefore "purchase friendship" by a stipulated agreement when we believe it to be capable of accruing to our own advantage. In the search for power, it may be imperative to retreat from competition and seek reconciliation, concord, peace, not out of any inherent regard for our fellows, but through fear of their instruments of revenge. In so insidious a form of passion as vainglory—the "feigning of abilities in ourselves which we know do not exist"—the exaltation of private power is the governing motive. Thus, when we are stirred to laughter by the manifest crudities or delinquencies of a neighbor, we are in reality comparing his deficiency with our own perfections. There is not a single relation or event in our intercourse with other men in which we do not assume that pleasure is won by the conscious assertion of natural rights, which is another name for power.

But, in the second place, the threat of power is so imposing that men have been compelled to seek relief in the formation of the state. Pleasure is now *preservation*. Nature has endowed every man with certain private rights, which cannot be alienated by force but which may be surrendered voluntarily by the agent. Chief among these is the endeavor to preserve peace, if in no other way, by the offices of war. Since in this effort the individual's life is often in danger, it follows that a second law should be derived, namely this, that by the terms of a settled covenant men accept only so much liberty as can be mutually pursued. Such a rule would seem to make way for the institution of social equality with its guaranties and immunities. But the temper of humanity

undergoes no change. Man in society is no less egoistic than in the state of nature. The covenant rests at once under the suspicion that one party at least is endeavoring to escape compliance with its articles. Hence, every citizen is justified in waiting for his neighbor to give some reliable token of his intention before undertaking to fulfill his own part of the contract. In short, we must have a prescribed sanction embodied in objective action. "Covenants without the sword are but words and of no strength to secure man at all."¹⁵ This is true in the intimacies of the social community, when we set bolts to the door and bear weapons on the high road. It is supported by the policies of government; for the peaceful intercourse of states is shadowed by the frowning fort or the swift-sailing men-of-war.

The simple deduction from the gathered evidence is that men do not trust their fellows; experience belies such trust. Since happiness is meaningless if life be extinct, it is essential to discover the means for preserving the priceless heritage of the body. Those means are reposed in the structure of the corporate state. It is not true that at a certain moment men entered into a binding compact and surrendered their rights into the hands of the common sovereign. It is true that in time and logic the individual and his interests stand before the interests of the sovereign as a political whole. The cry for security cannot go unanswered. To that extent, the purpose of any state may be expressed in the terms of Egoistic Hedonism.

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CHAPTER II

THE UTILITARIAN METHOD

The Egoism of Hobbes left the individual agent in a state of potential warfare with his fellows. Hobbes admitted that men must live in a covenanted relationship, but argued that this did not change one iota the character of the man or the direction of his conduct. The social state is a check to the excess of passion, not a stimulus to benevolent intercourse. Is this the final form of Hedonistic theory? An answer is given by Richard Cumberland in his "Laws of Nature," published in 1672. Happiness cannot be confined to the experience of the agent; it must comprehend the "common good of all." He who supposes that he can divorce his own feelings from the feelings of the group has no knowledge of the divine sanction or any appreciation of his own possible perfection. The religious point of view is for the first time emphasized; it is carried forward by Locke (1690), by Brown (1751), Tucker (1768), and Paley (1785). Even Sidgwick, more than a century later, is obliged to fall back upon a non-human urge in order to establish the principle of benevolence. But the strict form of Utilitarianism places the principle in the structure of the mind, as John Gay indicated in 1731, when he affirmed that men's ideas are necessarily associated in a system, so that when one appears another is sure to follow. The sanctions of the social community are fixed: namely, law, public opinion, physical pain, religion. Even though these are negative, prohibitory, they are effective. They force men to recognize the purposes of others. Hence, while the ultimate end may scientifically be egoistic, the mediate endeavors lead to the acceptance of a second axiom, just as real, "the greatest good to the greatest number."

We are now ready to study the latest applications of the Utilitarian method. It is due to the discussions of Hume in the "Inquiry" (1751) that human nature begins to lose its strictly "selfish" qualities and assume the "social" character which Mill makes the center of his theory. Since, in the history of English ethics, these two names have been closely linked, we shall examine their contributions at the same time. But no adequate understanding of the method can be gotten without a careful analysis of the arguments of the thinker who gave to Utilitarianism its official form.

The mind of Bentham (1748-1842) was distinctly objective. It had little of the introspective quality which we associate with the genius of Plato or Spinoza. He appealed to no universal maxims as did Kant; he declined to accept the subjective value of the good. He would follow no logic which relies upon an unexamined premise for its results; he called for a "logic of the will," an experimental logic that can deal with matters of conduct as does Dewey's logic with the cognitions of thought. Logic, as thus devised, would be to reflection as anatomy to the study of medicine.¹ In general, the scholar of Lincoln's Inn studied human nature as the raw materials of civil law, not as the basis of a system of ethics. We must therefore assemble the units of experience in order and then proceed to the adoption of principles.

Law is law solely because it grows up from a mass of correlated facts. A "judge-made" code of law is little better than the ritual of a priest-made religion. The final test of the civil order is not in the articulation of its statutes but in the obedience of its citizens. The rule applies equally well with respect to moral behavior. Customs are framed by the method of trial and error, and customs are the real indices of moral progress. Hence, the discovery of moral principles demands "investigations as severe as mathematical ones, and beyond all comparison more intricate and extensive." Moral truth is not gained by the mechanics of the syllogism;

¹ "Morals and Legislation," Pref., p. xiii.

it is not made up of a set of "detached and general propositions." The method forecasts the rigid analyses of modern scientific experiment. But, unfortunately, the results are remarkably disappointing.

1. Utility the Mark of Virtue.

It is customary to distinguish between two types of human action, natural and moral, the one involving the laws of body and mind, the other the reflective needs of the self. The distinction is unreal; both forms of action spring from the same source, the desire for pleasure. The contrast between psychological and ethical Hedonism is false. Nature has prescribed her canons; she has set the standards of conduct. Virtue has but one term, and that term describes every possible element of behavior.

(a) What makes an act *moral*? An act is virtuous because it is useful. Utility is the test of morality. The word "useful" has none of the broad significance that Plato gives it; it does not consider the ultimate purposes of a man's life. An act is useful by reason of its immediate consequences, the obvious and objective results. Those consequences are stated in terms of personal satisfaction. In Bentham's earlier works, there is a tendency to obscure the real acceptance of raw pleasure by the use of such covering words as "benefit," "advantage," "good," "broad happiness." In his last book, published after his death, the disguise is removed: "Every pleasure is *prima facie* good and ought to be pursued." The evidence lies in the common experiences of the race; whatever we enjoy, we seek to repeat; it fits into the organic needs. Hence, we are obliged to conclude that "every act whereby pleasure is reaped is, all consequences apart, good."²

The matter is still, however, in doubt. It has been pointed out that the author is a confirmed empiricist; he finds the rules of guidance solely in the multiplied deeds of expe-

² "Deontology," Ch. 1, 3, 4.

rience. Pleasure is a positive term, but it can only be explained by its contradictory, pain. "The amount of injury done by the inhibition of a pleasure which might have been enjoyed is equal to the infliction of a pain to a similar amount which otherwise would not have been suffered."³ Pain always arrests attention; it is acute, and when removed gives place to a definite sense of relief. Relief is itself one of the most agreeable feelings, and perhaps represents the purest form of pleasure. At the same time, pleasure is positive in its effects, as is attested by the love of acquisition, the sense of power, the exhilarating exercises of the imagination in the pursuit of literature or art, the enjoyment of friendly communication. In every case, the agent is conscious of being superior to his environment; hence, the action is to be regarded as good. If the act ends in depression or localized pain, we may be sure that it unfits us to grapple with the demands of the given situation. The argument, therefore, holds that arbitrary ends such as those set up by the Socratic school⁴ are without foundation.

Bentham directs the force of his invective against two types of ethical theory, the ascetic ideal and the principle of sympathy. The first of these, self-sacrifice, destroys the basis of all Utilitarianism. It has never offered a constructive program; it has appealed to the philosophic mind largely because it annuls the authority of the senses and contributes to the "elevation of the sentiments." But it cannot be reduced to practice; it misjudges the function of the desiderative impulses. These have been held to be the root of evil; they are in fact the integrative forces of reflective consciousness. Many men who deliberately aim to "make themselves miserable" suppose that by this device they may obtain religious or moral merit. But very few presume to inflict the same injuries on others without incurring blame from the group, not to say from their own feelings. If

³ *Ibid.*, I, 61.

⁴ Cf. Pt. II, Ch. 6.

they did, they would "in a day's time turn this earth into a hell."⁵

Nor is the principle of sympathy satisfactory. Sympathy means the tendency to make one's private taste the touchstone of moral virtue. Taste may be embodied in a rule of reason, the law of nature or the "fitness of things," divine election, "fairest and openest of them all," or an unerring intuition. Each of these, he argues, conflicts with the course of experience. If actions must be determined with respect to their ethical values only by their objective results—the one scientific method—, then private motives and ideals are without weight. What we know is that such motives have led to fanatic and extravagant deeds, to corrupt policy and unjust reprisals. Private counsel, then, has no worth as a test of truth; the judgment that is supported by definitive deeds where pleasure overbears the tendencies to pain—this is the counsel of morality. The one and only question before the mind is, what is the emotional value of the consequences?⁶ Bentham may return to Cumberland's query as to the "constitution of the human;" because the degree of pleasure must depend on the unhindered and natural discharge of the normal function. One cannot deny the validity of a law which he has in his own person. This law is not subjective; it is not the private wish of the agent; it is the stern operation of forces resident within the body.

(b) At this point we may properly consider the relation of motive and intent in the ethical system under review. Motives are the natural "springs of action," that is, habits of mind which provide materials for overt behavior. They have, therefore, no moral quality, and the same motive may give rise to the most contradictory decisions. Thus, curiosity may urge the boy to peruse an interesting book without reference to its possible effects on his future conduct. He may spin his top just to see how it "sleeps" at the moment of highest speed; the action has no moral worth.

⁵ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 2, Secs. 4-10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Ch. 2, Sec. 14, footnote.

But if he lets loose a mad ox on a crowded thoroughfare, we call the motive abominable and severely blame the lad for his dangerous thoughtlessness. In every instance, we are concerned with the results of the deed, never with the quality of the motive. Since the intent is registered in the consequences and not in the motive, the judgment of moral values must always be in terms of the consequences. Motives should be studied as the energizing powers of the mind; they belong to the realm of psychology. They will determine the intensity of the moral fervor expended in a given situation. For example, the vivacity with which a man answers the call to public duty will depend to a very great extent upon the ardor of what we call the patriotic sentiment. But, says Bentham, we cannot judge his action to be good merely by observing the intensity of his emotions, since the same emotions may carry him to morally disastrous ends. "The only way in which a motive can with propriety be styled good or bad is with reference to its effects in each instance, and principally from the intention it gives birth to."⁷ Yet even here Bentham is not quite sure of his ground. He is confronted with two disturbing facts: first, motives divide themselves into social and antisocial, and the latter are intrinsically bad; and secondly, motives conflict, when, on this theory, they are subject to unvarying laws and should act in perfect harmony.

The difficulties in the case are resolved if we remember that Bentham is not always careful in his definitions. Intention as defined by him carries with it much of the traditional meaning of motive. The mind is made up of dispositions, and every disposition is the "sum of intentions." Intention is influenced by the specific endowments of the agent—his physical structure, his mental aptitudes, his temperament, his sex and age, his religious prejudices, his economic status. Excessive sympathy, a tendency to conform readily to custom, even peculiarity of physique, like the lameness of Talleyrand, turn the mind to this object

⁷ *Ibid.*, Ch. 10, Sec. 33.

or that without effort on our part. We may rightly inquire whether it is motive or intent that rules at the moment.⁸ But we shall certainly agree with the author that intent implies a survey of the consequences of the act; that no act is an instantaneous and independent endeavor altogether divorced from its necessary effects. Thus, he argues, if I chance to touch my neighbor with a light hand, according to intention, and yet contrive to impart a stinging blow, my responsibility is confined strictly to the contents of my aim. The moral value of the act is in its consequences; at the same time, the act is modified by circumstances, and these the agent "does not intend . . . , he takes them as he finds them." Furthermore, Bentham distinguishes between the motions of the will and those of the understanding. The understanding considers the conditions under which the act is performed; the will carries out the intent as expressing the governing motive. It is the intention that evinces the kind of disposition a man possesses; hence, he needs no antecedent qualities to color and direct his course. The upshot of the matter is that desire is to be interpreted solely by the pleasurable or painful situations in which a man finds himself; and these belong to what Mill calls the "business part of human affairs."

2. The Greatest Good to the Greatest Number.

It is the boast of Utilitarians that the concept of pleasure undergoes a radical change through the stimulus of their analysis. "The dictates of good will," says Bentham, "are surest of coinciding with the principles of utility."⁹ Pleasure, or, as they now say, happiness, bears the imprint of a universal term. It is no longer a private feeling that seeks expression in action, favorable to others if possible, but injurious if one's inner satisfactions demand it. No man can be wholly happy so long as his neighbors or any of his kind are in misery. The constitution of human nature is

⁸ See Pt. II, Ch. 8.

⁹ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 10, Sec. 36.

against it. Still, in his posthumous work, Bentham retraces his steps and comes very close to the line hewn by Hobbes. He is prepared to "surrender every point that cannot be proved to be beneficial to the individual." The controlling maxim is that of self-regarding prudence, an explicit return to the philosophy of Epicurus; for it is such prudence that guarantees the continuance of the race. He is at one with his predecessor in holding self-interest to be the tested source of virtue. It is not, as some affirm, the detestable part of character. But there is another aspect to the case. Because men live together in society, there is a tendency to consider the interests of other persons. This tendency may be due to the herd instinct, which is at root egoistic. In practice, however, it lends itself to the institution of good will as a settled policy in social affairs. The tutelary motives see to it that benevolent actions shall in no way recoil upon the agent's own head, to his disadvantage. They do not, however, restrain the same types of action from becoming instruments of pain, as when a man strives to benefit his friend by means of injury inflicted upon others.

The Greatest Happiness principle has its foundations in three distinct endeavors: the first plainly social, good will; the second and third semisocial, reputation and amity. The first finds its seat in the offices of the civil state. The only policy that can produce true individual freedom is the recognition of the rights of our fellow citizens. The Utilitarian slogan, "the greatest good to the greatest number," means that safety, progress, defense, material development, depend upon the joint surrender of individual rights and the acceptance of duties on the part of the body politic. It does not guarantee comfort of body or mind to the entire mass of people constituting the state. The experience of English statesmen and reformers showed that to be impossible. The practical moralist sought for a program that could be worked, not for a Utopian and unattainable ideal. The revolt of the submerged classes in England was at hand; the French Revolution with all its excesses had taught the ob-

servant mind some salutary moral truths, one of which was the familiar axiom of Bentham: "Every man shall count for one and no man for more than one." The democratic formula is thus expounded. He stood for all its implications with courage and insistent rigor. Perhaps he did not foresee the fallacious conclusions that democracy would draw from it, as, for example, the conclusion that the majority is always right, which is as cynical as Napoleon's saying, "God is on the side of the strongest battalions." But the preservative force of the Utilitarian principle cannot be denied, and its force was felt at a moment in English history when the bitter reactions from the misplaced liberties of the French might have seriously changed the democratic program of the British state.

The semisocial motives conceal less successfully the egoistic instincts of the race. At the same time, they conspire to make effective the influence of the Greatest Happiness principle. The desire for reputation may have its roots in the love of self, in the fear that if one's honor be impeached his position in the world must inevitably suffer. Personal prestige is the sure concomitant of power; the two go together and cannot be separated. Bentham admits that we may in secret deny the validity of accepted canons of behavior and yet preserve the reputation for regularity, in the hope that the community will in due time acknowledge the justice of our contentions. If a man's standing in the group is menaced, his hope of ultimate success is extremely tenuous. Hence, if secret actions are repeated too often, and before the sentiment of the people has been changed, reputation is likely to come down with a crash, burying the semisocial motive in its own débris. No less significant is the quest for amity in the social state, the neighborhood, business relations, the family circle. Concord has its private advantages; it gives a man time to follow his own ends unmolested; it inclines his neighbor to give heed to his suggestions for the public good, without suspecting any possible excess of benefit to the maker; it creates defenders

of his name and fame in case of attack. The desire for amity embodies directly the principle of utility and thus leads to effective moral results.¹⁰

3. The Hedonistic Calculus.

We have now determined that the basis of moral action is pleasure both for the individual and his group. How shall we calculate the degree of virtue or vice in a given act? Bentham's arguments show that he looks upon the act as a deliberate choice, not as forced upon the agent by unmanageable conditions. We must therefore decide on a method for making the choice. Pleasure, being a physical fact, will have exact ratios, quantitative proportions. It comes in "lots," that is, units of feeling which should be subject to calculation. Dalton was at that time speculating on the correlation of atomic weights; why should not a wave of human feeling be resolved into its elemental parts? Sight, hearing, smell, yield their respective charms in my inspection of the beauty of the countryside. Each of these is a "lot" of pleasure, and when all are combined they will produce a definite elation of mind. May not moral satisfactions be computed in the same manner? Agreeable feeling is first individual and then social. The points to be studied in each case are these: How long will pleasure last, what is its intensity, is it certain to be felt, is its realization near or remote, will it be followed by contributory pleasure or the reverse? These are the six factors in the hedonistic calculus, which have been summarized thus:

Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure—
Such marks in pleasure and in pain endure.
Such pleasure seek if private be thy end;
If it be public, let them wide extend.
Such pains avoid whatever be thy view;
If pains must come, let them extend to few.¹¹

¹⁰ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 10.

¹¹ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 4, Note.

It is admitted by the author that the test is applied only with the greatest difficulty. Moral values resist analysis, especially under conditions of intellectual confusion and social conflict. But we must make a choice, and, if direct intuition fails us, we must resort to some empirical device. Since feeling is physical in its nature, it must, like heat, have its degrees; it may therefore be reckoned in terms like "work" done, force generated. The parallel is fairly exact; there is an "exciting cause," there are "circumstances influencing sensibility," and there is the pleasure-pain result. If we put these three factors together, we have the elements of a "moral arithmetic." Hence, if I find myself enjoying a book of poetry, I shall have little trouble in calculating how deeply I am affected by the act. The exciting cause seems in this method to play a minor rôle. As a moral stimulus, pushpin is as good as poetry, provided it brings an equal amount of satisfaction. The comparison is whimsical, but it contains an important truth. For the mind that gets delight from the popular game cannot at the given moment derive an equal degree of pleasure from the book. If reading poetry is in itself a more virtuous form of action than the diversions of the game, then we might question whether the latter exercise could ever assume the aspect of moral value. But, thinks Bentham, the adult mind turns impatiently away from the lighter object and seeks its gratification in the more substantial appeals to intellect. Hence, the one and only mode of determining the moral value of an act must be the volume of pleasure ensuing upon its performance. Negatively, this is the procedure adopted by society in the system of penalties corresponding to the gravity of the crime. We may expect a similar treatment of the positive pleasures which constitute the social welfare.

4. The Four Sanctions.

The pleasure or pain which follows a moral act is called sanction. It is the "source of obligatory powers or motives;" in fact, it is the only thing that can "operate as a

motive." The successful sanction is, therefore, objective; it belongs to the group of forces which can be reduced to the terms of civil law and which affect the *person* of the offender.¹² Force is the final arbiter in all human negotiations; a settlement of differences can be made in just one way—by the application of force. The principle is identical in the family or the social state. Government means the restraint of the recalcitrant citizen; parental jurisdiction means the control of the behavior of the child. Force and pain may be considered as equivalent. Coercion takes the following forms: pains of body, social ostracism (moral sanction), legal punishment, and the discipline of religion. In every instance, except some cases of religion, the pains are organic, either acute disturbances of body or depression of mind. Furthermore, the sanctions of morality are attended by fear. Thus, in legal procedure the appeal to fear is continuous. The mind is so profoundly affected by the threat of penalty that it will shrink from its imposition through fear. Here, too, the offender must be aware of the mathematical form of the sanction. The pain to be endured by him shall be no less in intensity than was the pleasure (profit) expected to be derived from the commission of the act. Civil law is a series of prohibitions; moral law must cultivate the same order. We obey the rules of health because we fear disease or death. We accept the customs of the group lest we should be excluded from its benefits. We hold to the creed of the church, knowing that she can stain our reputation and possibly consign us to eternal perdition. The basis of moral character is the principle of fear.

Now all these sanctions are, in a sense, external. Are we not also stirred by the love of our kind, by the desire to obtain the "greatest good to the greatest number"? The sanction of this formula, Bentham feels, is plainly "pathological;" it lacks the stern cogency, urgency, coercion, of the objective motives. It varies with individuals, groups,

¹² "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 4, Sec. 2, Note.

historical periods. It is difficult to compute in mathematical terms, since no one can say what the "good," happiness, of men actually is. The unscrupulous politician may readily employ the formula for his private gain. Even if we say that life, liberty, and the pursuit of human welfare are the prime objects of endeavor, can they be succinctly realized? Hence, we are obliged to fall back upon the sanctions determined by the law of the community; and even though its terms be negative—"thou shalt not"—still we may remember that pleasure is at bottom surcease from pain, the attainment of a mental and physical tranquillity where carking care and menacing fear are for the moment silenced.

5. Mill's Revision of the Utilitarian Program.

The Utilitarian program took root slowly but effectively in the soil of British thought. Its most notable adherent was John Stuart Mill, trained by his father, James Mill, in its subtle dogmas and practical spirit. We do not propose to follow its fortunes further than to explain the explicit changes which the younger Mill wrought in the program. The Hedonistic school suddenly found itself possessed of a new name, which aimed to alleviate some of the repugnance felt by the public towards the old idea of sheer, unmodified pleasure. Utilitarianism became the new title and the new creed. But, with the adoption of the name, there came also a determinate revision of the historic tenets. J. S. Mill protested against the charge that he had undermined the structural system by his new interpretation, but the protest was in vain.

(a) First, he introduced the concept of desire as the inevitable accompaniment of pleasure. This draws attention from the volume of feeling, supposed to be the index of moral worth, to the type of mind that seeks the pleasure. If "will in the beginning is entirely produced by desire," even though we "include in that term the repelling influence of pain as well as the attractive one of pleasure," the emphasis is shifted and must be re-evaluated. This is the

psychological principle upon which he insists: "The sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people do actually desire it." He continues: "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness."¹³ But Mill enmeshes himself at once in two difficulties which the Hedonistic school has never overcome. Is it true that every object a man desires is desirable? Do not the two words stand on different levels of thought? "Desirable" does not mean "what is capable of being desired," as "visible," "that which is capable of being seen." It has a moral significance, and assumes that the mind has the right of choice in deciding what it should desire, and that it does not make the mistake of supposing that every object the appetite terminates upon thereby becomes the direct and inescapable object of moral desire. The second difficulty is the one common to all Universalistic Hedonism, as Sidgwick calls his doctrine;¹⁴ how can we pass from the sum of individual desires, which is the desire for individual happiness, to the general desire for general happiness? No complete and inconfutable answer has ever been made to this question, and it is doubtful if any can be made.¹⁵

(b) The most radical change which Mill offers has to do with the nature of pleasure. He argues that pleasures differ not in volume but in intrinsic quality and are to be chosen upon that basis. The distinction, he holds, inheres in the Hedonistic scheme of thought from Epicurus to the most recent Utilitarian. We cannot, then, judge of their worth by the canons of permanence or freedom from pain or small amount of effort required to obtain them. The true good is not in the happiness to be won but in the kind of end we are to seek. If the test of worth is agreeable feeling, a state of contentment, then the fool satisfied is better than Soc-

¹³ "Utilitarianism," Ch. 4.

¹⁴ "Methods of Ethics," Bk. I, Ch. 6.

¹⁵ Cf. Pt. II, Ch. 4.

rates dissatisfied. When confronted with the public facts that men do "lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes," that "they addict themselves to inferior pleasures," then the reason for the conditions is plain: they have no time for the one and no access to the type of satisfactions which their inward nature really craves. In short, circumstance has played the cards against them and they are forced to take what forms of emotional exhilaration they can reach. There is, no doubt, much truth in his argument and he presents it with the verve and abandon, almost, of a new convert. But the fundamental point must be borne in mind: Mill has altered the method of appraising the moral act. The quality of the pleasure means literally the quality of the mind that seeks the pleasure. It is the character, the "sense of dignity which all human beings possess in one form or other—and which is so essential a part of happiness," that determines the kind of feeling we seek to realize. Hence, the test of moral worth lies not in the objective result alone but in the creative aim that stirs the soul to action.

(c) Next, Mill returns to the axiom of Hume that man is constitutionally sympathetic, that he is capable of making sacrifices, that he, therefore, recognizes the right of other men to happiness. The theory of Bentham has no such axiom. The social or semisocial motives with him were invariably rooted in the love of self. Instead of such an egoistic program, Mill asserts that "as between his own happiness and that of others, Utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator." In fact, the golden rule embodies the "complete spirit of the ethics of utility." The sanctions must be both internal and external. The debilitating negations of the orthodox program must be superseded by the constructive obligations of moral purpose. Men need not fear the word "duty;" it belongs to Utilitarian morality as much as to the Transcendental. Only, we must undertake to set the sanctions in concrete form. The civil law and social institutions should "place the happiness or interest of every

individual as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole." The task is formidable, but must not be shirked. Education and public sentiment should bring to bear on the individual the concept of social interest, so that he may "be unable to conceive the possibility of happiness to himself consistently with conduct opposed to the general good."¹⁶ Sanctions now are positive; the reign of law as mere prohibition is abrogated. The creation of character, both personal and social, becomes the slogan of the new theory. If this be the doctrine of utility, many of the charges laid against it are null and void.

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CHAPTER III

THE ETHICS OF EVOLUTION

We must distinguish between two forms of development. It is agreed by the great majority of ethical writers that the world of human culture has slowly widened from the common reactions of physical behavior to the clear analysis of concepts with a definite moral significance. Such a thinker as Hutcheson has no trouble in adding this idea to his theory of Moral Sense. But development means something more than this in the program of evolution. The field of organic life is here regarded as one. The simplest living body has something akin to the most complex organized behavior. There is a steady advance from the infusoria to the primates. By the use of the scientific imagination, we can detect the principles of moral reaction in the habits of many animals. There is no good reason why we may not see in them working rules of conduct for every sentient being. Furthermore, it is alleged, we get a better understanding of human values if we compare them with the elementary types of organic reaction which have none of the conventionalized expressions of sophisticated society. The whole argument is open to serious suspicion, but it has made a deep impression on the modern minds and must therefore be considered.

We propose to study the points in the evolutionist's program as they have been stated by Herbert Spencer. His two books, written nearly forty years apart, "Social Statics" and the "Principles of Ethics," will furnish the necessary materials. It is his purpose to define the "scientific basis" upon which a system of ethical postulates could be erected. He rejects as untrustworthy the common method of moralists, which assumes that ethics possesses a group of cate-

gories cognate to itself. The "data" of conduct must be of a sort that can be examined by the ordinary rules of science. Principles that hitherto have been applied by common sense or religion are without effect. Self-assertion as in the issues of war, self-sacrifice as required by the church, mean nothing when divorced from the conditions that gave them birth. We need another sanction as guide to conduct. Morals cannot go undirected. The tendency of Utilitarianism was to let the common law dictate the modes of moral practice. But civil authority was vague and unfruitful. The cool assurances of the Manchester school of economics that the individual alone counts have been nullified by experience. These formulas had never been analyzed by the processes of science, and therefore they were not of experimental value. On the other hand, the pronouncements of science have the merit of being precise and concrete; they have been found useful in physics and biology; they should have a suitable place in ethics.

We may in passing record the fact that between the publication of Spencer's two works a decided change in scientific interest had taken place. Darwin's "Origin of Species" switched the focus of inquiry from the inorganic to the organic world. It introduced an entirely new set of concepts and profoundly affected the moral perspectives of thinking men. Hence, when "The Data of Ethics," the first part of the "Principles," was composed, the influence of the new ideas was plainly visible. The categories of the physical sciences gave way to the concepts and terms of biology, as we shall soon note. The law of causality is superseded by the principle of purpose. Man is not merely a resident of the material world; he is also a link in the chain of an evolutionary process. These facts must be borne in mind when we are seeking for an empirical account of human conduct.

1. The Sphere of Moral Behavior.

The attitude of the ethical scientist may be expressed as follows: It is not our function to vindicate the authority of

the moral rules found in human consciousness; we must trace them to their source, in order to discover whether or not they properly formulate the true laws of organic reaction. Current rules are often defective; they must be modified or destroyed under the stimulus of experimental analysis. War as an instrument for settling disputes is plainly contrary to the fundamental axiom of nature, which is the instinct of preservation. It must be eliminated; but how? By the genetic method—first track the institution to its cause and then eradicate the cause. It is therefore necessary to determine the field in which human behavior operates.

What is the meaning of conduct? It is obviously a distinct whole; for, while we speak, and rightly, of the moral act, no act can stand alone by itself; it belongs to a series, as does every other event that is studied by the eye of science. Nevertheless, the whole is one by virtue of its parts, being not a sum of them but a unity defined by their presence. The temple consists of foundations, walls, portico, surmounting entablature; this is its structural oneness; unity of another sort abides in its inherent purpose, the worship of divinity. In like manner, the trial in court is a sum of events—the testimony of the defendant, the charge against him, his cross-examination, the verdict of the judge; it is also a functional whole—one event in the history of the man under accusation. Hence, conduct must be defined as a continuum of thought and behavior; it is not simply a series of nerve changes; that would include epileptic paroxysms, which are pathological, not positive, reactions. Conduct is the “adjustment of acts to ends.” Yet not every act is directly moral; some are indifferent as to moral quality, such as the æsthetic appeal of the waterfall; yet the act, by virtue of its position in the series, becomes in the twinkling of an eye imbedded in the full moral purpose of the man’s behavior. Here, the idea of duty obtrudes its intrinsic force. We are not obliged to ascribe beauty to the moiling waters; we are obliged to cut short our observation of them if we intend to keep an engagement with a friend. Just what the

difference between the two "feelings" is, Spencer fails to say. He designs to impress upon us the consideration that moral and non-moral acts are so intimately connected that both must appear as securely fixed in any single human series.¹

We may now take the second step. If moral conduct is but a segment of man's complete purposive behavior, his whole life is also but a fragment of the "universal conduct" which embraces the acts of "creatures of all orders." The relation of man to organic life is evolutionary, first in structure, then in function, finally in the kind of behavior produced. Our interest lies in the third fact. What is the nature of the progress from the lowest to the highest species? It is summed up in the word "adjustment." Primitive organisms fail to survive except for a few brief moments because they lack the power of coördination; they cannot acquire food. Hence, the test of superiority is the *length of life*, and this we define as the purpose of the organism. Still, the savage may live as long as the man of culture; are their moral qualities on the same level? We must add a second canon to the first—*fullness, breadth*. Length plus breadth measures the purpose of existence. But experience for all manners of races reveals the methods by which the second canon is applied. Breadth requires the procreation and nurture of children and, in the case of man, the development of the finer sensibilities. It also institutes contacts with other men and family groups, and then competition begins. The world is now the scene of struggle, contests of strength, where only the fit will survive. In the face of these conditions, notable changes in the structure of character must ensue. Adjustment must be quicker, more effective. It must also become more comprehensive. Hence, Spencer perceives in the group the beginnings of "mutual help in the achievement of ends." Moral conduct now definitively succeeds mere casual reaction, and the predicates of good and bad

¹ "Data of Ethics," Ch. 1.

assume their place of authority in human intercourse. "Conduct gains ethical sanction in proportion as the activities, becoming less and less militant and more and more industrial, are such as do not necessitate injury or hindrance but consist with, and are furthered by, coöperation and mutual aid."²

2. Quantity of Life and Moral Conduct.

We have now deduced the axiom that quantity of life is the basis of moral action. Is this true? The elements of life—health, vigor of body, clearness of intellect, acuteness of sensibility—may have degrees; indeed, do always have them. Does moral value depend solely upon these? Kant has already shown that neither of these possesses a good that can be accepted as unqualified. To say that goodness consists in performing the duties appertaining to a specific function, as the care of the mother for her child, does not furnish an ultimate end; it merely gives the rule required for reaching a subsidiary end. The very properties which Spencer adopts as ends crumble under searching tests. Thus, duration of life in individuals is by no means an unmixed good for the community; it raises such questions as, what provision should be made for indigent poor or disabled, when "fullness" of living is no longer possible? Again, "fullness" as a physiological concept may be capable of exact determination in the analysis of an organic process; it is extremely elusive when referred to human conduct. Spencer complained in "Social Statics" that the idea of happiness is indefinite; nevertheless he accepted it, on the ground that all simple concepts fail of precise definition and yet must be approved and applied. He does no better in the later formulation of the moral end.

What, then, can evolution guarantee as the true end of conduct? If we say that "agreeable feeling" embodied in

² *Ibid.*, Ch. 2.

fullness of life is "a necessary form of moral intuition, as space is a necessary form of intellectual intuition,"³ we must find some method by which the feeling may be scientifically estimated. The Utilitarians signally failed because they did not have at hand a true knowledge of the laws of life. If we can determine the nature and scope of these laws, we are prepared to solve the problem. Spencer, therefore, turns to the realm of science and selects four principles of action, coherence, definiteness, heterogeneity, equilibrium, each assuming in the course of time a fixed moral value. Thus, the moral mind is coherent—a promise to pay is satisfied to the smallest detail; it is definite—an engagement is kept to the minute; it is varied in form though unified in action—many motives direct the behavior to one end; it is marked by balance and rhythm, as is seen in the harmony of actions throughout the moralized group. The result of moral conduct is necessarily pleasant, even when physical injury must be suffered. The test of the act's morality depends on whether it causes the specific function engaged to discharge itself with satisfaction. No act can be assessed as good and right if no permanent pleasure follows; for all "pleasure-giving acts are life-sustaining acts," and the maintenance of life is the supreme purpose of morality.

However, Spencer admits that the reflective capacities of man have produced a "change of conditions great and involved."⁴ A new mode of reaction which has no prototype in subhuman species is now at work and at times requires forms of response that could not be made by them. He tries to cover up his inconsistency by suggesting a division between the lower and higher impulses; in that case, however, the test of value is not in the pleasure enjoyed but in the kind of desire chosen. At the same time, he taught his generation a much-needed lesson in the moral worth of good hygiene and physical exercise. The sanctions of the human body are valuable principles which must be understood and respected by the moral agent. It is by the operation of such

³ *Ibid.*, Ch. 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Ch. 5.

sanctions that the idea of obligation assumes its recognized place in human thought and in social behavior.

So far, the control is of the same sort as that exerted over the lower organisms. But Spencer thinks that he can detect a finer form of control in line with what McDougall calls the "sympathetic reaction." The "truly moral deterrent" is not the restraint of pain which society will inflict, but the sensitivity of mind which pictures the harm done to the victim or his friends and which therewith shrinks from the commission of the act. This sanction, which is a revision (or dilution) of the familiar idea of conscience, carries with it a revulsion of feeling against the deed, a feeling of pain even more incisive than the pain which society could impart. Its authority is not subject to the fluctuations of practice under the spur of irrational feelings; it issues from the developed sentiments of the mind. It is the product of a man's own will; it loses the sting of social coercion; it gives a man moral independence. With the slow moralization of social activities we may expect the sense of obligation to disappear; men will discharge their functions in the group, not automatically, but with a clear understanding of all social needs, including their own. "Sentiments will guide them as spontaneously and adequately as now do the sensations."⁵

Certain serious difficulties confront the student of Spencer's ethics, which we may notice at this point, since they are slightly different from the arguments common to other Hedonistic writers. First, is it to be taken without reserve that survival-values are always equivalent to pleasure? Can we not cite pertinent examples to prove that by strain and hardship, even by the acceptance of impaired health, men have been lifted to heights of moral success that otherwise would have been unattained? On the other hand, is it not true that certain pleasures have brought weakness and loss of vitality, mental decay, and moral degeneration? Secondly, can coercion as a fact of life create a sense of moral respon-

⁵ *Ibid.*, Ch. 7.

sibility? The self-sacrifice which Spencer sees in animals is obviously automatic, not determined by choice and reflection. Many of his parallels are forced; he insists on the exact analogy of human living to animal living and yet admits the principle of reflection as the genuine determinant of moral conduct. Lastly, he thinks of duty as a vanishing element of thought when men have thoroughly adjusted themselves to their environment. Its place will be taken by a sentiment in harmony with the demands made upon them. But it may be replied that the human mind is not governed strictly by feelings and never can be. The "truly honest man," if he exists at all, may lose his sense of the imminence of external restraints, but he never can dispose of the "thought of self-compulsion." No observant critic will deny that the habit of goodness is just as real as the habit of walking; but he will not agree that the particular act may not and will not be analyzed, severely criticized, and evaluated in the light of the total conduct, before the good man is sure that his specific action is right.

3. The Relation of Self and Others—the Doctrine of Altruism.

The ethics of evolution begins with the fundamental processes of life—its origin, maintenance, development—and finds here the first imperative. "The acts required for continued self-preservation . . . are the first requisites to universal welfare." Egoism forestalls the laws and usages of altruism. Thus, a rugged race springs solely from the vigorous life of its antecedents; a prosperous community finds its success in the labors of its individual units. Individual success means individual happiness, and the glow of one man's contentment is communicated to his fellows. Yet there is another face to the question. Common sense has paid its tributes to the refined sentiments of unselfishness. To be sure, some of the most brutal deeds in history have been done in the name of brotherhood—thus, nations seek for "benevolent penetration" into the territory of backward peoples. But nature has prepared the ground for

altruism as well as egoism. The birth of offspring, the care of children, the defense of the family, the organization of the state, all reflect nature's demand for sacrifice for the greater good of the whole. Spencer is sure that evolution teaches the second axiom of benevolence, not as of primary authority, but as an instrument for the checking of the ravages which egoism inevitably forces. The axiom tends towards universal acceptance, although we cannot expect that it will assume the position of cardinal importance occupied by the first axiom.⁶

The situation, then, is this: Two contrary principles struggle for the mastery in human intercourse. Nature has prescribed both, one for the perpetuation of the race, the other to give breadth and fullness to the individual's life. At times the axioms seem to conflict; how shall they be reconciled? The Utilitarian program will not do it; it argues for the greatest good of the greatest number, but can devise no mode for reaching it except by the sanctions of law. Spencer holds that the higher egoistic satisfactions will consist in "ministering to others' happiness as a daily need." The purest pleasure he can think of is the mother's ministering to her babe; it is physical for both; it is imitative for the mother as she watches the gratification of the child. The rule is that a pleasurable consciousness is aroused by the sight of pleasurable feelings. Sympathy grows with the demand for happiness; when the instinct becomes universal, the tendencies to unjust actions will be completely restrained. The argument again proceeds without the recognition of the basic difference between man and brute. Granted that a hint of sympathetic reaction appears in the behavior of the animal, yet it is extremely close to the feeling of resentment. And so it is in man's history. The sight of misery in human body, face, or social condition awakens repugnance in the mind; but the feeling of favor is checked and thwarted by the temper of revenge that floods the consciousness of a people in time of war. Sympathy is too

⁶ *Ibid.*, Ch. 12.

tender a plant to root in the soil of stern morality. We need a rationalized benevolence, a decision to hold our fellow men in strict regard, whatever be their conduct or thought. The animal world has here no lessons to teach nor any traditions to hand down. The essence of what we call "humanity" is alien to its intelligence. Hence, evolution as a biological concept cannot lay the foundation of a scientific ethics.

Especially is this conclusion necessary in the light of Spencer's doctrine of justice. "Every man," he says in the "Social Statics," "is free to do what he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man."⁷ This is another statement of the first axiom and is derived from intuition, not experience. Sidgwick shows that justice cannot be founded on freedom or equality, because in the course of human history neither of them is ever realized. Yet even he finds the axiom to be original, underived, necessary for every kind of action. But Spencer has great difficulty in obtaining the definition from the evolutionary axiom; for "animal justice" is equivalent to the survival of the fittest, and this conjunction is utterly repugnant to human nature. If the decisions of the courts were cases of the strongest man's victory, where would the state be? The point to be noted is that Spencer confuses the "is" and the "ought-to-be." He carries human rules back to the animal world, and brings up so-called scientific laws into the field of human action. Human justice cannot mean the triumph of one man over another or even of a state over its citizens. It must mean the exact reward to every agent of those goods or ills which correspond to his type of character as expressed in action. It would seem that under this system of reflection men could get much nearer to the borders of benevolence than by the method he proposes. Certainly, the idea of justice rises above the level of controversy over the value of objective rights and seeks its goal in the character-relations of men within the social group.⁸

⁷ Ch. 6, Sec. 1.

⁸ Cf. E. Albee, "History of English Utilitarianism," p. 341, *et seq.*

4. Absolute Versus Relative Ethics.

It is somewhat strange that a writer on evolution should think of an ultimate system of morals by which to test the relative forms now in operation. We assume that the genetic process is continuous, that it has no limit, that it can present only principles for general progress. But the term "absolute" is used by Spencer only in a logical sense; he aims to put the uncertain modes of moral action against the complete and comprehensive type valid for all times and peoples. In every situation he supposes that there is one act that is right. What is it? If it can be found, it must of necessity be the absolute form. If it cannot be found in actual practice, we can at least create in our mind an idea of what it is. Now, since the test of moral value of an act is the pleasure-units in its effects, we must inquire whether there be any events in human experience that have an absolute quantum of pleasure for all persons concerned. He can discover but two, and the second of these is not entirely pure. Thus, in the relation of a healthy mother to a healthy infant, "there exists a mutual dependence which is a source of pleasure to both." If the relation is suspended, immediate pain occurs to both. The situation, therefore, is to be regarded as absolutely right. The second example considers the attitude of a father to the sports and tasks of his son. He joins in the games and the work with a zest that seems practically spontaneous; he is engaged in a right action, "giving and receiving gratification from moment to moment while furthering ultimate welfare."

Perfect ethics is thus a subdivision of physiology, which studies the complete organism, both as to structure and function. The fallacy of the case appears in the analogy. Spencer does not see that both types of action exclude explicit control. It is only by an unwarranted extension of the meaning of the term "moral" that the first example can come under its rubric at all. The second case has more explicit moral values, inasmuch as the habits of play are

learned, while the mother's behavior is the immediate expression of an inherent tendency. But the analogy itself is inexact. Physiological data are fixed; they do not change. Moral data develop with the age of the subject and the level of culture; they act by principle, not, as in the body, by habituated modes of response.

Is there, then, no absolute morality? Spencer cites the attempts of many thinkers to define moral law in terms of the character of the good man. He rightly criticizes the method as containing a *petitio principii*; for we first construct a virtuous character by adding together the qualities we deem to be approved, and then create from them a standard of conduct in the shape of a typical personality. Such a person must appear in a society composed of untruthful and dishonest members, and, if he were understood at all, would make no appeal for serious emulation. The portrait of the Sage is a confession that men have failed to effect a true and convincing evaluation of the principles of right living. We must, then, Spencer thinks, determine the "law of the perfect man," the "formula of ideal conduct." Geometry may teach us the correct method of approach; for it demands that all straight lines should be straight, and all curves described according to their intrinsic properties. Ethics must proceed in the same manner; it must have its man *straight*, not crooked, where the quality sought is straightness. And this means but one thing: "correspondence between all the promptings of his nature and all the requirements of his life as carried on in society." The contrast between the actual and the ideal, between the unlawful and the lawful, is decisive. If there be "disordered action," there must also be "well-ordered action." This is true in body; it must be *made* true in mind. If moral order be as yet but an idea, it is this idea that men must set up as the guide to relative goodness. But such an idea cannot be expected to function in a disordered society, or, at any rate, in a society which has no enduring standards of behavior. We must, therefore, act *as though* we were resident already in an ideal community with its

ultimate laws and powers, always considering "whether the conduct fulfills them as well as may be." Such an ideal may not be an intuition of the moral sense, but it is a logical rule of procedure.

The argument we have summarized cuts loose completely from the methods of scientific inquiry. It is true that physics and physiology must often do their work with uncertain data and lame rules. But they never, in modern thinking, give themselves over to the sheer range of fancy that is here proposed. Spencer descends from his ethereal plane by the qualifying clause just quoted—"as well as may be." This is the maxim of science in its more modest moments. It can mean but one thing: the formula of an absolute ethics is unworkable. In fact, the principle of an ideal society is open to the same objection as the principle of an ideal man. Men do not live by portraits or aggregates of properties, but by the concrete rules of conduct. The concept of "absolute justice" has no meaning; even insofar as it has been drawn from the observed movements of society, it furnishes no real, universal principle for men to follow. What we need to know here, as in all phases of moral behavior, is, what is the supreme aim of living? If increase of pleasure and diminution of pain be inadequate standards of judgment, what then shall we seek?

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CHAPTER IV

THE FALLACIES OF HEDONISM

The case for Hedonism in its several aspects has now been presented. We have studied its historic development from two viewpoints, first, the range of persons affected by the moral act; and, secondly, the mental property which is called into operation. In every instance, the writer assumes that man can, by nature, have but one goal to conduct—the acquisition of pleasure or happiness. These two words appear at every turn, but, while their meaning changes with the angle of approach, the common center is the agreeable feeling which the agent deliberately and consistently seeks to obtain. Happiness may refer to the finer types of ends which yield pleasure to the seeker—the absorption in religion, the desire for learning, the tranquil satisfactions of family life. Or it may be merely the name for a sustained series of pleasures, each of which is associated with a denotable mental endeavor. The purport of every definition is that behavior gets no moral value apart from the pleasurable consequences of a given act. The naïve observer grants this claim without debate, because the strictly physical exhilarations seem to be the desired ends; they give us that undoubted impression; for example, the gratification of hunger seems to be the same as the agreeable feeling accompanying it. If it be the rule for immediate and primitive desires, the more complex ends should share the same privilege. It is the task of this chapter to demonstrate that the judgment is fallacious.

Before entering upon a systematic rebuttal, we should do well to recall to mind a truth which we have frequently emphasized. No moral action can be considered as a mere momentary event in the agent's career. It looks backward

to the sum of qualities which makes the man what he is; it looks forward to the congeries of results which are set in motion by the decision of will. Among these results must be numbered the series of pleasures and pains that Hedonism looks upon as the single test of moral value. Our contention will be that the consequences of a moral act are necessary elements in every moral situation, but they cannot by themselves determine the ultimate value. They must be weighed and estimated as causal factors along with the motivating aims. The Hedonist errs in laying all stress on consequences; his opponents, in restricting moral quality to the actuating motive. We shall argue for a synthetic method, uniting the two in a homogeneous purpose, which we may tentatively call the making of a sound character.

1. Theoretical Objections to Hedonism.

(a) The first fallacy is a fallacy in psychology—reserving the principle of pleasure as a criterion of moral emotions alone when it properly belongs to every mental act. We have already defined the place of feeling in human endeavor. The most rudimentary appetite develops an agreeable or disagreeable affection as freely as the most refined sentiment. Desire of any sort is followed inevitably by its proper feeling. But value cannot be assessed solely in terms of emotional effects, since an intellectual analysis is required for the recognition of valuable qualities. Yet even the untutored mind is sure to claim that no judgment is complete if judgment is entirely separated from feeling. Thus, the Stoics who rejected the Hedonism of Epicurus found in every virtuous deed a definite penumbra of satisfaction. They might also have agreed that a similar sensation attended the application of the logical categories in the deduction of a sound judgment. Here, however, they dissented strongly from the Epicurean view that the test of truth lies in the agreeable feelings produced. Feeling, whether good or bad, is the natural result of conscious effort, not a guaranty of the successful conclusion of an argument.

When Epicurus and his associates accepted the pleasure-pain series as a working instrument in determining true knowledge, they therewith admitted that an *exclusive* use of feeling in making moral decisions was impossible. If we prove the goodness of a moral act and the truth of a logical proposition by the same method, what shall hinder us from transferring the results of one judgment to the form and contents of the other? There is, as we have discovered, a vital difference between judgments intellectual and practical; the force of the first is never transferable to the second. We cannot *persuade* a man to be good. We are not justified by any law of psychology in giving emotion, which is strictly physical, a determinative part in deciding what action is truly moral.

The offense of the Hedonist grows more serious when we examine the relation of the idea of beauty to its accompanying emotional response. Great schools of thought have identified taste and feeling as integral elements in the third normative science, æsthetics. While their premise is wrong, their error at least emphasizes the extraordinary influence of beauty and ugliness upon the æsthetic emotions. Thus, if we stand upon the prow of a great ship when the tempest rages in the heavens and on the deep, there is a profound sense of sublimity awakened in the soul, a penetrating sense of awe not untouched with fear, a surging of the passions of the heart not unlike the agitations of the sea. Motion and emotion are near of kin. The breath of the body seems like the heaving of the restless waves; the very personality reacts to the electric currents of the air. This is the intuition of power, the quintessence of human satisfaction.

But if pleasure and pain follow from contact with nature's beauty, can they likewise be made the criteria of moral goodness *in a peculiar way*? Or, if they be recognized as applicable to both states of mind, æsthetic and moral, can they consistently indicate goodness and evil in one case, beauty and ugliness in the other? In fact, are we certain that ugliness always produces a feeling of depression? Is it not a clear foil to beauty, and therefore a distinct aid in

effecting a pleasurable appreciation? Furthermore, if feeling is the same for both goodness and beauty, can we find the same scale of degrees of pleasure in the intuition of beauty as in the determination of goodness? Is it literally true that the more beautiful an object is, the more intense is our emotional response? It is open to question whether one can decide the relative beauty of the "Sistine Madonna" and the "Mona Lisa" by the gravity of our impressions, since the subject matter and the glorious colors must always be reckoned in. The criterion of degree seems to be out of place here, and we may conclude that it is equally out of place in our estimation of moral values. No man has yet determined whether the sacrifice of the martyr or the performance of the humdrum duties of life elicits the greater degree of pleasure. The error lies in giving an unnatural meaning and office to this fundamental function that belongs to all conscious behavior.

(b) The second fallacy is this: Pleasure has no value whatsoever except as it is fastened to an object. Hedonism separates the two. Green puts the case succinctly when he says that pleasure as feeling, in distinction from its conditions which are not feelings, cannot be conceived.¹ It is possible to analyze out the factors in a moral situation and show how each makes the situation possible. But Sidgwick is certainly wrong when he holds that "pleasure can be estimated separately from its condition."² If that were true, then the contention of Bentham must be granted that push-pin is as good as poetry, considered merely as a medium for the production of pleasure. But no man can judge the meaning of his pleasurable feelings if he cannot apprehend the object that generates them. Consider again the classical example in Sophocles' "Antigone." Antigone decides to bury the body of her slain brother in disregard of the King's command. The custom of the Greeks is insistent; no uninterred warrior can expect to enter the regions of the blessed.

¹ "Prolegomena to Ethics," Secs. 156-8.

² "Methods of Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 3, Sec. 1.

Her deed requires courage, rare endurance, defiance of death. Upon what moral grounds does it rest? The Hedonist replies, upon the amount of pleasure to be gained. If Antigone can remain unmoved by the contumely heaped upon her beloved dead, then her disobedience would be a vicious act. If, however, her own happiness and the Elysian bliss of her brother depend solely on the burial of his dead body, then hesitation would be morally disastrous. The test of goodness is satisfaction; the Hedonistic program, its creed, and imperative are fixed; Antigone must take the risk of incurring the royal wrath for the sake of the pleasure sure to ensue. Is the criterion exact? Is feeling, divorced from every element that justifies the act, the one dogmatic basis of moral value? The issue is thus joined; how shall it be settled?

The solution can rest on nothing but scientific principles. We therefore appeal to the canons of psychology. A study of animal intelligence shows that feeling is aroused by the approach of stimulus. The master's voice awakens the sleeping pointer, who makes ready at once for the hunt. The familiar signs of pleasure are manifest in his behavior. They do not come alone; they cannot be understood apart from the exciting object. To attempt to measure the degree of gratification without comprehending the cause would be a travesty on scientific method. The analogy need not be carried further; the facts are clear to the eye; feeling and conditions are essential to the appreciation of the act. The pull towards pleasure, the aversion from pain, must be related to the kind of object that produces them. The choice of the object, in turn, waits upon the type of character developed in the agent. Every moral situation, we said, is complex; it embraces feeling as well as the desire for the object. Hence, the feeling of pleasure or pain must conform to the kind of object which the agent inclines to choose. The analysis shows that Antigone had no conscious desire for the attainment of pleasurable feelings; she sought the single desideratum, the honorable burial of her brother's

body. Feeling, then, cannot be esteemed as a separate good, as some commentators hold; ³ it is not collateral with virtue, knowledge, æsthetic inspiration, or material possessions; it is the accompaniment of desire, no matter what ends desire may attempt to realize. Hedonism cannot solve the basic problem of moral choice. For the happiness men believe that they seek must be attached to some definite object; otherwise it can neither be understood nor converted into an aid to moral development.

(c) The third fallacy involves a mistake in logic. It assumes that we can anticipate the hedonic quality of an act by the pleasure we derive from its prior contemplation. The pleasures of anticipation are greater than the pleasures of realization—this is the common form of the fallacy. No man decides to act, runs the formula, until he is certain (i) that he can secure the pleasure desired and (ii) that he can secure enough of it to reward him for his efforts. Hence, the decision cannot be casual or arbitrary; it must be made in the light of distinctive rules. Plato recommended a method of mensuration which he called the “saving grace of life.” ⁴ The Hedonist follows the method to the letter. It appears to him exceptionally simple and practical, consisting of two parts—an examination of the satisfaction-units drawn from a consideration of the desired end, and a judgment whether the achievement of the end will yield the expected pleasure. Let us take an illustration. Alexander the Great proposed to push his conquest to the limits of the known world. Hedonism would insist that his decision was based on the pleasurable feelings attendant upon the analysis of the idea. Because the idea of conquest seemed desirable to him, he was justified in expecting a degree of delight comparable to the energy expended in reaching his end. The two factors to the equation, then, are (i) pleasure in entertaining the idea, and (ii) pleasure at the conclusion of his conquests.

Are we permitted by the terms of logic to set up such an equation? The answer is in the negative. A serious fallacy

³ Cf. H. Rashdall, “Theory of Good and Evil,” Vol. II, p. 38.

⁴ “Protagoras,” 356, *et seq.*

lurks in the comparison. The analysis of the idea, the contemplation of its several parts—character of the agent, specific desire, means to fulfill it, feelings aroused—, is a judgment of value; it is not a psychological fact of immediate experience. It is, therefore, an independent logical proposition: "The conquest of the world will give me pleasure." At the same time, the entertaining of this idea brings affective consequences of no mean order, a glow of pride in previous attainments, reliance on self for future success. With this emotion is to be compared the pleasure experienced in the flush of victory. Now, since pleasure is of the body, we may establish a sort of balance between the two "lots" of pleasure—one following from an idea, the other from an event in nature. But we can never establish an equation between the stimulating objects, the idea, and the natural event. The idea of a possible victory has no logical relation to the execution of the idea on the field of battle; to put it briefly, we cannot proceed from the acceptance of an idea to its sure realization. Hence, there can be no exact correspondence between the resulting feelings. For this reason, it has frequently happened that the pleasures of prospect are keener, richer, more penetrating, than the pleasures of fulfillment. They stand on different levels. The one is the gift of idealism, the other is the creature of brute naturalism. The one expresses the sentiment of buoyant hope, the other registers the stern decisions of law. The rocky promontory of many a Hellespont is the seat of disillusioned, not to say bewildered, victors who have tasted the rewards of human conquest and found them but the dregs of joy.

(d) The fourth objection to Hedonism lies in what is called the Hedonistic Paradox. This asserts that he who diligently seeks for pleasure and puts the zest of his enthusiasm into his quest, and thinks of nothing but the rich delights he is to enjoy, will end by never seizing it. It is an elusive goal won only by the runner who "forgets" the rewards in his efforts on the track. Happiness, if it is to be possessed at all, must be pursued by the right methods. Thus, the

voluptuary at his table finds how difficult it becomes to stimulate his taste after the appetite has become cloyed by excess. The student who aims at the delights of learning, thinking only of the agreeable sensations awaiting him when some new piece of knowledge is discovered, generally ends by having the edge of his intellectual hunger dulled to the point of extinction. Even the joys of friendly intercourse diminish in intensity once men consciously make gratified feelings the sole objects of pursuit. It has been held by some that the same paradox follows exclusive concentration upon any recognized types of desire, for example, honor, virtue, love of money, spiritual vision, moral earnestness;⁵ hence, it is unfair to fix a peculiar blot of guilt upon the Hedonistic formula. This claim, however, is by no means established. With respect to pleasure, no doubt exists—defeat of aim invariably climaxes a man's intense engrossment in search of it. Hence, it is the part of wisdom to disguise the real objective and adopt some concrete end, some pregnant desire embodying the serious purposes of life. This is Sidgwick's advice to men who have met the paradox in their own careers.⁶ Without admitting it, he surrenders the principle for which Hedonism stands, and thus destroys the system.

We therefore inquire why the deliberate quest for happiness ends in failure. Few persons except those with highly moralized minds have thought the matter through. The solution to the problem lies deeper than many critics suppose. Pleasure, which is always another name for happiness, is not an independent fact of consciousness; it is always joined, we said, to its object. Consequently, it cannot require the attention of men as a distinct end to be gained. We are unable to set our mind on a goal that does not exist; if we do, we are but pursuing an idea and need not complain if the goal be never reached. It is quite the reverse with legitimate ends, for example, fame. Subject to the provision that the quest for fame must be conducted with the good of

⁵ Cf. W. G. Everett, "Moral Values," p. 142.

⁶ "Methods of Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 3.

neighbor as well as self in view, no one may hesitate to affirm that certain substantial satisfactions are bound to be won. Even the desire for reputation after death, posthumous fame, that radiant hope of many reflective Romans, brings its meed of rapture, and brought it especially to minds that saw the steady decline of moral ideals in the fading days of the Republic.⁷ Yet the emphasis lies not on the feeling but on the fact. It cannot be alleged against this motive that the desire for fame may weaken, even disappear. Desires change in the plastic growth of thought; new views of life, new problems of conduct, enter upon the scene; but change of ambition, whatever its form, is the evidence of vitality, the index of a flexibility of intellect which distinguishes man from the brute. Because desire is subject to reflective analysis and feeling is not, the substance of desire cannot be removed even though its form alters. The conclusion may be stated thus: *The moral force of character depends not on the intensity of feeling but on the quality of the desiderative ends.* Contrary to the opinion cited above, there is no paradox of desire; it functions unceasingly and with appropriate effect.

2. Practical Objections to Hedonism.

In addition to the fallacies in theory which beset the Hedonistic program, there is a long series of practical difficulties to be settled before the program can take its place as a true guide to conduct. It is our conviction that the difficulties are insuperable. No author has so illuminatingly expounded the empirical objections as Henry Sidgwick, himself a declared Hedonist.⁸ We may follow his examination of the subject. Let us bear in mind that Hedonism, like every other ethical method, deals with concrete events in reflective behavior, not with abstract terms or universal propositions or types of conduct in an ideal society. Hedonism admits, at

⁷ Cicero, "De Senectute."

⁸ The reader is referred to Sidgwick's "Methods of Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 3, where a full account of his argument will be found.

this point, a reservation that may tell strongly against its claims; namely, that when we analyze a feeling at a specific moment in our career, the tone and intensity of the feeling diminishes under our very gaze. The criterion of the "quantity of pleasure" is weakened at the start. Furthermore, if the quality or kind of pleasure is to be determined, not its amount—that is, its momentary impression on consciousness—then the difficulties of the case are seriously increased. The task before us is not easy; it requires patience and impartial judgment.

(a) The first group of difficulties have to do with the correctness of the estimates which we place upon experienced feelings. Two questions must be asked and answered: Is the report of my feelings clear? Is it consistent with subsequent judgments on the same subject? We meet at once the condition we have casually hinted at, namely, that pleasure is a single instant in the career of the experient, that it passes and is never repeated in the same form, that any description of its quantitative (or qualitative) properties must be made after it has ceased to exist. Plato calls attention to the law that we remember the *fact* of feeling, but not its terms. We say, for instance, that we are powerfully stirred by the eloquence of an address, the impassioned manner of the orator, the persuasiveness of his argument, the solemn mood of the assembly, the resolution to action taken by us at the moment. Later scrutiny of memory fails to divulge a specific degree of pleasure; hence, we find great trouble in comparing it analytically with impressions obtained on a similar but later occasion.

The difficulty grows when we undertake to strike a balance between agreeable feelings derived from different sorts of pleasurable objects. Since, in this method, the moral value of the act hinges upon the degree of feeling, pleasant or unpleasant, which I can compute from experience, it is imperative that I find a common mode of approach. But how can I compare such utterly different types of enjoyment as those (to use Sidgwick's list) drawn from "labor and rest, excitement and tranquillity, intellectual exercise and emo-

tional effusion, the pleasure of scientific apprehension and that of beneficent action''? Still more perplexing to the moral judgment is the situation in which pleasure and pain are mingled. When Brutus plunged the knife into Cæsar's breast, was his intuition of the preponderance of pleasure over pain clear and convincing? Later, when the flush of triumph at his alleged discharge of duty had paled before his realization of the horror of the deed, dare we suspect that the patriotic joy possessed, in memory, the same intensity, the same abandon, the unconquerable zest that made the blood run like a flame through his body on the commission of the deed? If we ask memory for a clear appraisalment of the justice of the act, on the basis of the excess of pleasure, the response is vague, even querulous. Nothing is so futile as the endeavor to justify the moral value of behavior on the basis of its supposed delights, especially since pain, a negating term, enters at once into the composition of fancy to alter the intrinsic meaning of experience. Moral values cannot be determined by hedonistic computation.

The difficulty grows graver when we seek to confirm our judgment by a subsequent examination of the same experience. The vacillation of opinions grounded in feelings is notorious. They reverse themselves without reason; they take their color from every new situation. Hence it happens that the same affective state is variously estimated, not by virtue of a mercurial temper, which we might correct, but in accordance with the action of causes over which we can assert no definitive control. Sidgwick mentions two of them, the nature of the image which we recall, and the condition of the mind when the image returns. We have already suggested that the feeling-image is extremely shadowy; it is a mere incident in an individual's history, its content is well-nigh a blank. Hence, the representation of its form may easily be uncertain and changeful. But this is not the really important point; life moves forward; moods vary, sanguine and lethargic states succeeding one another, often with great rapidity. Furthermore, the judgment of a given moment is

charged with the electric energy of the environing atmosphere. If Brutus chances upon the friends of Cæsar, he begins to reprobate the act which removed an ornament to the state. On the other hand, he inclines to resuscitate in consciousness the glorious feeling of victory if the direful effects of Cæsar's autocratic rule are suddenly thrust before his eyes. Which of these is the true judgment of his experienced feelings? Who can tell?

If such variations inevitably occur in measuring the technical degree of pleasure, how can we ever arrive at an explicit and enduring evaluation of the act? The suggestion of Sidgwick is a counsel of despair:

Since what we require for practical guidance is to estimate, not individual past experiences, but the value of a kind of pleasure or pain as obtained under certain circumstances or conditions, we can to some extent diminish the chance of error in this estimate by making a number of observations and imaginative comparisons, at different times and in different moods.⁹

Note the errors, trace them to their roots, correct by careful analysis the defects of the imagination, continue the inspection of your behavior unceasingly, finally strike an average which ought to give you a working rule for most cases. The method can yield but a rough approximation to truth—but it is better than nothing at all. If this be the end of the Hedonistic program, it were well to stamp its inadequacies at the start, and let it alone.

(b) The second group of difficulties concerns the application of an "approximate" judgment to a future decision. Here again we are confronted with the logical distinction between the judgment of value and the judgment of obligation. For many Hedonists the value-judgment carries with it the will to act; it possesses some of the Socratic urge—if a man knows the good, he will do it. The case, however, is not so simple. The world of experience has changed—yes, changes even while we speak. The dominating desire, the feeling to which we are *now* susceptible, the structure of the

⁹ "Methods of Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 3, Sec. 6.

body, the circle of acquaintance, register the extent and thoroughness of the change. This we have already admitted as influencing the judgment on past conduct. It is doubly significant when, to such a judgment, we must add the will to do. Hence, the hedonistic calculations must be revised. But how? We can no longer rush headlong into action as we did in youth, trusting that a special providence condoned errors and corrected mistakes. We must now weigh every article of the proposed behavior by the tests of an expired enjoyment. Moral rectitude depends on the mathematical count of joys and griefs, exhilarations and depressions, likely to proceed from the new experience. This fact may well make us pause as we survey the future. The conscientious man will doubt his capacity to decide; the discreet man will disregard the meaning of moral purpose in his struggle with the hedonic assets and liabilities of experience. The method passes from the level of difficulty to the level of impossibility. Moral decisions cannot be made by the count of numbers; virtue is not determined by the surplus of pleasure-units over pain-units. Judgment and desire are the cardinal elements in the making of character.

(c) Lastly, the Hedonistic formula attempts to use the behavior of other persons as a guide to action, and must find a satisfactory mode of doing so. This is the new element in the calculus which brings with it its own type of error. It is ordinarily assumed that men are endowed with similar qualities and that they invest these qualities in the same kind of habits. They must therefore derive commensurable amounts of pleasure and pain from the same moral situation. But a study of the behavior of a single integrated group like a body of college students reveals more unlikenesses than similarities. It is bound together by common rules and prescribed duties; yet the diversity of reactions is as multifold as the interests represented. To diverse native dispositions we must add the differences that environment develops. Still further, since all emotional facts are private and can be estimated by the alien only with an extremely low degree of accuracy, we are obliged to depend

almost exclusively on the judgment of the experient as to what the nature of his feelings actually is. Now, if the man who is to help us to a decision proves to be an incompetent judge of his own feelings, though professing to know them fully, we shall add to the constant error just mentioned the probable error of individual judgment. Hence, to the difficulties due to comparing the experiences of persons with divergent tastes we must join the difficulty of obtaining a veracious account of any man's pleasures and pains.

It is obvious, then, that the Hedonistic method deals with mental facts that resist analysis by the most careful observer; it is more than worthless in the hands of men who have no training in the field. We may end our criticism with the summarizing remark that man acts, not by the spur of feeling, but by the direction and urgency of the intellect. The imperative of Hedonism can have little weight.

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CHAPTER V

THE TRANSCENDENTAL METHOD

Immanuel Kant

We enter a new moral climate when we abandon the ideal of pleasure as the standard of conduct and study the method of ethics which lays the entire stress on judgment. The variations in the use of the method have been numerous; yet there is a sufficient likeness to enable us to make a single classification. We begin with the theory of Kant, because he assumes that the value of the moral act is determined strictly within the mind and depends in no respect upon the empirical character of the agent. We shall then examine the articles of the Socratic school, where judgment and behavior are united in the development of character. Finally, we shall survey the system of Spinoza, where purpose is represented as the fundamental principle of thought and action. When this study is complete, we shall have a fairly comprehensive view of the theory which regards the aim, standing at the head of the judgmental series, as the main, if not sole, depository of moral value.

The method of Kant is called Transcendental. It is directly opposed to the empirical methods of the English thinkers, and implies that moral conduct is to be judged virtuous, not because of its salutary effects on body or condition, but solely by reason of its originating motive. His procedure follows in every respect the lines laid down in the "Critique of Pure Reason." Experience is to be examined from the standpoint of the independent activity of mind. The reflective judgment has certain determinate categories, modes of thought, by means of which the facts of conscious perception are converted into elements of knowledge. Truth is not

communicated by the senses; it is discovered by the mind. In the same manner, moral conduct derives its validity, not from the presence of desire or emotion, but exclusively from the authority of the moral reason. It is the business of ethics to eliminate all computation of value on the basis of pleasure or pain and to confine itself to the structural principles which the rational judgment lays down. The ambiguities and confusions of the Hedonistic method are thereby avoided, and the deliverances of moral truth become exact and coercive.

1. The Place of the Practical Reason.

We may agree, then, that the source of authority lies in the reason, never in the desires or their emotional content. But reason is not the judgment of the individual considered singly and apart. Opinions fluctuate; they participate in the uncertain movements of desire; they are affected by the private moods of the subject; they lack the regularity of law. Hence, moral certainty cannot rest there. Moral reason represents unity of thinking, a directive force that stands behind the multiplicity of natural tendencies and controls their actions. We are obliged to divide the character of man into two distinguishable parts, the empirical and the rational. The first belongs to the sphere of sensation and is subject to the laws of cause and effect; the other has its own operating principles, chief of which is freedom.¹ For purposes of obtaining knowledge, this division must be recognized. Information comes to the mind through the channels of sense and is interpreted by the concepts of pure thought. Speculative reason can direct the rearrangement of its ideas; it cannot change the objects that produced them. Practical reason, on the other hand, has a more effective function; it can force the man to act. Its principles are prescriptive, not like the precepts imposed by an authority other than our own, not like maxims which private senti-

¹ Kant's "Theory of Ethics," trans. by T. K. Abbott, 5th edition, pp. 78, 79. All references are to this book and edition.

ment decides to be good, but rules of action categorical in form, unalterable in content, and applicable to all men without exception. Desires have no such universality; they are influenced by temperament and environment. Hence, the judgment of desire can be only hypothetical and fundamentally unreal. Even self-interest as a principle of conduct can be discovered only in experience, and experience gives us an uncertain testimony. In short, Kant wholly rejects his former view, derived from Rousseau, that judgment shares with feeling the right to determine moral values. Judgment is pure, *a priori*, untouched by desire; it is the *form* which every practical action must adopt, if it is to be thoroughly moral. Such a judgment is a universal law. This is the first point in the Transcendental method.

2. The Good Will as Summum Bonum.

But law and judgment are terms in logic; they must be converted into an animating principle which we call the will. It is here that real freedom is found. Freedom, however, does not mean that we can inaugurate a new series of organic events hitherto unknown, that is, wholly disconnected from the type of action already followed. Such events belong to the province of time, since time must elapse between the cause and its due effect. If moral behavior were performed *in time*, that is, subject to the control of physical laws, it would lose its universal reference altogether. Thus, if a man commits a theft—steals *goods* from his neighbor—he acts as part of a necessary time-series; consequently, the act is determined, which is another way of saying that it is beyond the bounds of choice. How, then, can the practical reason affirm that it is wrong and *should not have been done*? The contradiction is between the act's appearing in time-series—committing the theft—and the consciousness of the agent that he by his own decision brought the act to pass. How shall we resolve it? By recurring to the distinction already noted between the two types of character, empirical and rational: the one obeys the laws of mechanism,

the other the rules of reason. Both are performed by *one man*; "hence he may justly say of every unlawful action that he performs that he could very well have left it undone."² Empirically, the action came from his own past; practically, that is, in reason, it does not represent the whole synthesis of ideas which belong to his governing personality. Hence, he is sure that on another occasion the very opposite form of conduct would result. But the fact of first importance is the sovereignty of will, whether or not its terms be embodied in public behavior.

If will be the source of moral law, then will is the one good thing in the world. Two definitions have been attached to the word *good*, one referring to sensuous desire, the other to moral conduct. Since man is an integer in the world of sense, certain objects are provisionally good, talents of mind such as wit and discernment, qualities of temperament like daring and perseverance, gifts of fortune such as wealth, health, civil power, even a moral property like self-control, which "constitutes part of the intrinsic worth of the person."³ But they have relative value only and may easily lead to moral defeat. It is futile to seek for moral good before we have formulated the law which prescribes its terms. That law must be found in reason and is identical with the determining will. It cannot be derived from experience, as Hedonism affirms, for reasons already given. Will, we said, is the only power that leads to action; hence, it alone can take the predicate of goodness, it being understood that actions, not ideas or feelings, have the right to be entitled *good*. Man as a rational being has his purpose within himself; he exists for himself; he cannot take his end from another. Other organisms derive their worth from the offices of nature; they are things. Man belongs to a kingdom of ends and possesses inherent dignity. Whatever stimulates organic desire gets a market value, but no intrinsic worth. Whatever appeals to private taste obtains its rating through subjective sentiment. But personality

² *Ibid.*, pp. 137-9, 189-91.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 10, 152, 153.

has absolute worth; nothing, not even pain, can destroy our sense of human dignity. Moral good and human selfhood are the same, and both are expressed in the principle of the Good Will.⁴

How, then, in practical experience shall the choice of right action be made? Kant assumes that it *can* be made, that in fact man's nature demands that it be made. Having the power to choose, we must infer that virtue lies in the judgmental contents of our choice, never in the agreeable feelings ensuing therefrom. The moral judgment makes its own precepts, which are embodied in the usual categorical forms just as in Speculative Reason. Morality, for Kant, is not a secret motion; it is expressed through the habits and desires of the body. But it cannot proceed as an ordinary action which makes use of the senses of the body. It is able to give a particular *tone* to the public behavior, and this can only be done by the "Typic" of judgment which shows how the proposed act will enter into the system of nature and be obedient to all her laws. Should the proposed act stand the test, it will be accepted as a true judgment. But our troubles are not yet at an end; we must next inquire how we can organize the judgment into a true program of conduct. The agent now knows that he *ought* or *ought not* to act in a certain way. Such conduct has been confirmed by the corporate requirements of the state. Social approval or reprobation advises him that he is true or untrue to his established character. Moral actions, in fact, are not performed under time-conditions; they represent a permanent body of ideas, a true End, a Good Will which seeks to make its judgments effective.⁵

But how can we account for the presence of vice? Vice, Kant thinks, operates through the organs of desire, and inclinations always hinder the application of law; they "lie in the road." In his essay on the "Radical Evil in Human Nature" he adopts the modern formula that desires are without moral color; they provide the field for the genera-

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 47, 53.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-63, 191-201.

tion of character. Sin must not be sought in a corrupted reason; if that were so, then the cure of sin would be impossible. "A malignant reason is the reason of a devil, not of a man." Sin arises from the union of reason and desire, though just how it arises he does not precisely state. There is a lurking good in the most hardened criminal, but in general his inclinations have overridden the behests of reason. Hence, we come back to the original assumption, that, if man were solely rational, not at all instinctive, his conduct would invariably follow the laws of goodness. But then, we reply, he would not be a man! ⁶

3. The Moral Imperative.

The source of authority and the determinate form of the Good are now before us. What assurance have we that moral action can be obtained? The answer lies in the existence of an irresistible moral imperative. Duty is the judgment of reason and must be done. The command is direct and unconditional. It differs by the wide heavens from the commands of Hedonism. In order to be happy one must pursue a prescribed course. Yet the judgment is contingent. First, we do not know what happiness is; secondly, we are by no means certain of the instruments of will that can produce it; and thirdly, if we follow the given course, we cannot tell whether it will actually give us what we wish. Still, sometimes, the Hedonistic command has the force of practical necessity; for instance, we are bidden not to make deceitful promises lest our credit in society be impaired.

The imperative of reason has none of these uncertainties; it requires complete and unequivocal obedience to law. It is possible that one may satisfy the letter of the imperative by the Hedonistic method, "in accordance with duty;" but conduct thus stimulated is not strictly moral, since consequences should never be considered in determining the value of the act. Thus, one may exercise justice out of love for harmony and order, just as politicians recommend

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 325, *et seq.*

external adherence to a legal statute (for example, the Prohibition Amendment) in order not to disturb the peace of the party by charges of inconsistency on the part of the leaders. Such obedience is not moral; it is merely a matter of expediency. Only when reason commands can our action be moral. "Duty for duty's sake" is the one effective ground of conduct. Kant pays his tribute to its nobility in his celebrated lines:

Duty! Thou sublime and mighty name that dost embrace nothing charming or insinuating, but requirest submission and yet seekest not to move the will by threatening aught that would arouse natural aversion or terror, but merely holdest forth a law which of itself finds entrance into the mind, and yet gains reluctant reverence (though not always obedience)—a law before which all inclinations are dumb, even though they secretly counterwork—; what origin is there worthy of thee, and where is to be found the root of thy noble descent, which proudly rejects all kindred with desires; a root, to be derived from which is the indispensable condition of the only worth which men can give themselves? ⁷

But the categorical imperative is not an indistinct urge; it can be analyzed into three specific maxims which the rational self is bound to observe. They may be stated as follows:

1. Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law.
2. So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only.
3. Act on the principle that the will of every rational being is a universally legislative will.⁸

Lest the formulas appear vague and without content, let us test their validity by four types of duties, perfect and imperfect, private and social. One example of the perfect private duty is the prohibition against suicide. Why can we not will suicide to be a universal law? Are we not justi-

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 47, 49.

fied in attempting to escape from the torments of suffering by canceling the life-principle in the body? An examination of the laws of life, however, shows that the primary axiom is self-preservation. Only by contradicting the axiom which makes life real can we convert the proposed action into a law, and this is impossible. May I not then will the prohibition to be universal and yet reserve the right to make an exception in my own case? Kant is sure that we cannot justify the adoption of the rule of inclination instead of reason; and he thinks that, even though we make the exception for ourselves, we thereby only confirm the universality of the categorical imperative as a law of reason. We may apply the maxim in the same way to the other duties; for example, giving a deceitful promise to pay when we know that we cannot fulfill it, declining to develop a natural talent, and refusing to aid a neighbor in distress.

Let us apply the second maxim to the last case. It is required that we treat all human beings as ends, not as means only. If we reject the appeal for help of body or mind, we are using our neighbor as the means for the retention of our material possessions or of our personal comfort. For the ends of my neighbor are intrinsically the same as my own; and they ought frankly and effectively to be made my ends. Here again I may argue that I have the right to except myself from the operation of the rule, even when I have admitted its universality. The answer to this repeated claim is made by Kant in accordance with the fundamental definition of the will. A maxim is not a subjective form of action; it has the force of an objective and universal law. Hence, no exception can be taken which would cancel the legislative character of the will. Hedonism does this and is accordingly dismissed as inadequate; it depends on the changeful temper of feeling for its sanction. Moral action is in no way determined by private interests; its authority goes back to the judgment of reason, which is universal in scope and content.

4. The Perfect Good.

Virtue is the supreme good of the soul—the *summum bonum*. This does not, however, imply that it is the only good. Common sense demands a place for happiness in the scheme of human conduct. To this assertion Kant does not object. The question is, what shall be the relation between them? Happiness cannot be the ground of virtue, since such an imperative, as we have seen, is bound to fail. Is virtue the cause of happiness? That would be difficult to prove. What we can prove is that happiness “presupposes morally right behavior as its condition.”⁹ In the perfect world these two factors hold a dominant position. Happiness is thought of as inseparable from desire, and desire functions only through the organic senses. Since the mind cannot regulate bodily acts so as to insure the full increment of pleasure, it will follow that moral goodness cannot by itself guarantee happiness. The antinomy of the practical reason is therefore before us. The claim of the Hedonist that happiness exactly proportionate to the moral character developed is to be found in society is peremptorily denied by Kant. We cannot make a man virtuous by “praising the peace of mind that will result from a consciousness of integrity,” and urging him to seek for that peace.¹⁰ In fact, true satisfaction is not entirely or mainly in the empirical life; it is really independent of desire; it assumes a mastery over its several forms. Even sympathy and compassion are obnoxious to rational agents except in so far as they have sprung from the performance of duty. Happiness, to be rational, must accord with the idea of personality as the one moral end. It may be expressed in terms of self-contentment, which has but a negative relation to one’s environment, where we are “conscious of needing nothing.”¹¹ Such a state of mind may not be interpreted as feeling; yet it may easily run into the exhilarations of the emotional life.

But the relation between happiness and virtue is still in

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

the abstract. Happiness, we said, springs from the conditions of a good experience. But what assurance have we that such connection will be maintained? The assurance rests on what Kant calls the *interest* of pure reason, which, in its speculative function, means the acquisition of true knowledge and, in its practical function, the determination of the good will.¹² In the latter, the effect is always the creation of virtuous character. Interest thus involves the dignity of Self, and its effective realization becomes a cardinal article of faith. Still, the highest purposes of the soul can be fulfilled only under two conditions, which Kant calls postulates: its immortality and the existence of a divine Providence.

Thus, the aspiration for holiness cannot be attained so long as the desires of the body hold the mind in definite restraint. But the idea of holiness is a permanent element in the rational life and must somehow be realized. We may therefore assume that our personal identity will be retained after death, and our moral development continued indefinitely. This, however, does not touch the question of the satisfactions which *ought* to accompany the achievements of virtuous character in a truly moral world. The perfect good is reached when happiness is proportioned to desert. The difficulties in the way are serious; no system of laws has ever effected a reconciliation. Indeed, many jurists as well as moralists, including Aristotle, have given up the case. Many agree with Kant that no necessary relation between the two actually *exists* in human experience. But the moral sense is not satisfied until the good man is assured of some form of happiness; since human reason and will cannot procure it, we must entertain the idea of a Supreme Being who can guarantee such an adjustment. But the adjustment will not be an exact equivalence between goodness and contentment *in every case*. The divine purpose consists in making men *capable* of becoming truly moral and therefore content. That is to say, virtuous conduct makes us *worthy* of the gift, not necessarily its complete possessors.¹³

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 216-20.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

5. Criticism: the Fallacies of Kant's System.

(a) The initial error in the system is the psychological fallacy of arbitrarily dividing moral consciousness into two separate and incommunicable parts, reason and desire. Butler makes use of the same analytical division, but holds that reason is always expressed in the two fundamental desires of self-love and benevolence. Hence he is not far from the scientific analysis of modern psychology. Desire is not a subsidiary function in the formation of character; it is one of the three coördinate aspects of every moral action, namely, desire, an intellectually discerned end, and feeling. Desire contains in itself the energy of will. Hence, will does not exist prior to or above the originating motives of behavior; *it is these motives in operation*. Since that is true, will cannot be an independent and autonomous power, the right arm of the practical reason; it does not "give laws" to the "lower faculties." On the contrary, it is a logical category which states the meaning of every functioning desire and shows how it finds a place in the actual behavior of the agent. Under this method, the authority of the moral law may not be as precise and categorical as in the Transcendental system. But moral freedom now becomes a workable principle, while in Kant's account it cannot be more than an hypothesis adopted to explain men's inner experience. The best he can do is to assume an established parallel between the changes in the efferent nerve system and the mental attitudes which are said to be the products of free moral choice. This, however, gives us nothing but two readings of the same action, the latter of which is merely the logical interpretation of the first. The theory of desire as we have developed it has no such contradiction.

(b) The second error in the system is the fallacy of the Good Will, which lies in the mode of determining the good. It is, no doubt, true that moral action must be regarded as voluntary. If the agent cannot make a choice between types of represented desires, the action which he performs will be of the same nature as a simple reflex movement. But the

exertion of the will is primarily a teleological function of the organism, which has its counterpart in the spontaneous leap of the tiger on its prey. It is quite beyond the bounds of logic to give a man's will a single color, namely, goodness, which must necessarily belong to his constitution and without which he cannot be *man*. In fact, Kant has specifically denied this in his study of the bad character. If badness comes into being by the union of reason and desire, then moral goodness must issue from the same source. This leaves us with one only original standard of moral judgment. Or, turning the question around, if goodness belongs intrinsically to the rational will, then every action which is inaugurated by it (and there is no action without it) must possess the same unblemished complexion. The history of the individual and the race contradicts such a deduction. There is also a logical argument against it: if the will produces but one kind of moral quality in conduct, namely, goodness, then that quality can have no coherent meaning, since goodness and badness are complementary terms and one has no standing without the other.

From every angle it appears that the *summum bonum* cannot be identified with the will as an independent faculty. The judgment of the practical reason cannot be invariably right.

(c) The third error found in the Transcendental method is the assumption that every individual will has the natural power of legislating for its kind—the fallacy of a legislative will. The assumption is not borne out by the facts. It is possible to cite cases where no clear moral judgment can be detected in the behavior of the subject. Thus, the savage, the child, the backward mind, are helpless before the implications of the maxim. Also, certain types of matured intelligences seem to have no intimation that other men might be involved in the form of behavior adopted by them. Furthermore, many sensitive and refined persons would shrink from giving their private judgment the wide scope provided by the third maxim. They can legislate for themselves, but they decline to make laws for humanity. On the other hand,

the agent reserves the right to nullify the provisions of any proposed law in one case—his own. Hence, the attempt to universalize a norm of action which the maker may refuse to apply to his own conduct is a mere subterfuge to cause the legislative power of will to *appear* sovereign. Kant tries to purge his doctrine of “exceptions” by suggesting that inclination insinuates its corrupting force and suspends the action of the law. But if desire, as the enemy of reason, can actually cancel adherence to a law that has been willed as an objective and necessary moral truth, on what ground then can the authority of reason be said to rest? The one saving clause in his argument is the recognition of the imperative values of other ends, that is, other *selves* like unto our own. Since communication between them is set up only through the channels of feeling as expressed in private intercourse or social custom—a *kingdom* of ends—it follows that judgments as to virtue or vice, law or prohibition, depend solely upon the attitude of the established group. Hence, while the individual may recommend, he cannot dictate, and the coercive element of the legislative will disappears.

(*d*) The fourth fallacy lies in Kant’s contention that happiness has no place in the performance of duty or the formation of virtuous character. The two factors are entirely separate, he holds, since pleasure depends on desire, and desire involves sensuous experience. Butler, on the other hand, admits that affection is a necessary part of all experience; hence, its several and sometimes conflicting forms must be correlated into a system of moral behavior through the offices of reason. If this be true, then the desiderative function must be considered in determining the goodness of an act. In fact, happiness is the objective test of the success of virtuous action; it cannot prescribe the terms or intent of conduct, but it can show whether or not the conduct performed belongs of right to the type of character espoused by the agent. Such tendencies as resentment or compassion, such moral properties as justice and injustice, reveal their true import under the spell of the ensuing feelings. The

purest form of satisfaction, as we have already argued,¹⁴ lies in the deep contentment of spirit which attends the conceiving and executing of one's duty. The loss of external goods in no way impairs the zeal that inspires the good man in pursuit of honor and truth.

Happiness of this sort is not deemed irrelevant to the nature of the moral task; it does not diminish the energy nor detract from the solemnity of behavior. We may rightly hold that moral education requires a careful study of the kind of goods that yields the finer type of satisfaction. Such education is more efficacious than all the restraints of social authority. But moral judgment demands that happiness shall take root on the present level of experience; it must not be projected into an unknown and unknowable future. Such postponement of the reconciliation between virtue and its proper reward has resulted in serious inequalities, which have been justified on the ground that nothing better could be obtained. Consequently, in order to effect a logical nexus of ideas, a sharp contradiction between moral programs came into being. It was argued that the strong may test their strength on the inferiority of the weak, and any injustice resulting will be redressed in a later existence. Religion lent its authority to the validity of the dogma, and only the intellectual renaissance and the rise of the new science uncovered the essentially immoral qualities of the program. In fine, moral facts belong solely to the world of desire and judgment, and no principles that cannot be tested by their categories should be allowed to influence the course of behavior.

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¹⁴ Pt. I, Ch. 6.

CHAPTER VI

THE FUNCTIONAL METHOD

Plato and Aristotle

1. Socrates, the Discoverer of Ethical Method.

The first systematic study of the principles of ethics was made by Socrates and his disciples. It had never before occurred to the men of Greece, or indeed of any other country, that the facts of human conduct might be arranged and classified in the same way that we organize our knowledge of the objective world. The method of study will be the same. Logic provides a valuable instrument for arriving at truth. We call it *definition*. The defining method is simple: we draw a limiting circle about the contents of a given idea and then determine its relation to other concepts, especially by finding its genus and its species. Thus, justice is a matter of law which establishes satisfactory connections between men in a community. When this definition is successfully made, a flood of light is thrown upon the whole area of law and its implications. Socrates then develops the denotation of the idea, as logicians say, that is, the range of application of the specific subject. The process is called induction and consists in bringing every new example of justice back to the underlying principle. Thus, good citizenship cannot be defined by citing an impressive list of names; this is the method of the crude politician. We must determine the inherent rights and duties of the citizens. Many debaters have supposed that they could explain the concept of justice by describing the character and work of Aristides, called "the Just." They have made the name obnoxious by its simple repetition.

But Socrates is not alone a skillful logician; he is a careful observer of the constituent factors of mind. His ethical studies begin at that point, and his first counsel to any who seek his advice is: "Know thyself." The new imperative is intellectual; it has to be; for no human agent can act his part honorably in the group unless he knows his capacities and his appetitive tendencies. The method of ethics is strictly functional; it marks an extraordinary advance in the manner of examining the fundamental purposes of man, *what he can do*.¹ Socrates then proceeds to argue that moral behavior is based upon natural functions; upon all of them, not upon one. True, he appears to distinguish between intellect and impulse and to give the place of eminence to the former. But the emphasis is logical, not moral. In his famous maxim "Virtue is knowledge," he seems to set the highest price on a man's ability to discern the good, whether or not he performs it. No doubt, here Xenophon's report is correct: "He did not discriminate between wisdom and prudent conduct; justice and every other virtue *is* wisdom." The meaning of the contested proposition is not far to seek.²

The Sophists had argued for the dominance of instinct, the one original power of the mind. Socrates objects that, while the instinctive act may yield the same result as the act which is guided by wisdom, their moral values are poles apart. The second is performed by a man who *knows what he is doing*.³ He knows what brings "profit" to a man's character, that is, what enables man to develop most successfully his personal qualities.⁴ Every moral decision is a judgment of value; it looks to the end, which is the complete development of human faculties. Hence, the intellect judges a habit from the standpoint of its relation to the whole. The conclusion is inevitable that morality is not native to the mind; nor does it come by quick intuition; nor is it handed down as a family legacy, for then the son of Pericles

¹ Xenophon, "Memorabilia," IV, 4, 5, *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, III, 9, 4, 5.

³ Plato, "Gorgias," 482, 483. . . ⁴ Plato, "Charmides," 174.

should have inherited a sound character, while in fact he was shiftless and ne'er-do-well. In short, virtue can be taught; it is or is not communicated by the customs of society. We should therefore observe two explicit rules, which will be expounded further by followers of the master; first, conduct is a means between extremes, and secondly, it is mainly occupied with the direction of our impulses and emotions as embodied in the affairs of family, community, and state.

2. Plato and the Functional Method.

In the judgment of Plato, the study of ethics is but one of the many scientific interests of the human mind. The dialogues which deal most freely with moral ideas deal just as freely with the elements of reality in general. Yet, in a very special sense, moral experience is the capstone of intellectual pursuits; it organizes into a consistent whole all the functions of intelligence and directs them to a single end, namely, just action. The "good" of ethics, therefore, may be said to be the most complete expression of the "good" of logic. Logic passes beyond the capacity for making valid judgments in particular cases. It rose to great heights under the subtle power of the Socratic dialectic; it now seeks the pinnacle of truth in the principle of the Good. The good of logic embodies the ultimate purpose of every thing, event, relation, idea. Justice, said Socrates, is the administration of law; justice, Plato affirms, is the integrative power of consciousness, the essence of order whether in mind or matter; hence, the necessary principle of all law. Can we find the end and goal of moral conduct?

(a) The method of the dialectic requires us to begin with a familiar concept in the field of study. Two current theories assume to provide the true basis of moral action, Hedonism and Intellectualism. Neither of them is adequate, and Plato tells us why. We have already acquainted ourselves with the fallacies of the former, and we may therefore sum up Plato's refutation in a few words. Pleasure deals with ap-

pearance, not with reality; it states what men *feel* about an object, not what they *know* about it. Wisdom, beauty, reputation, wealth, enter into the making of experience and character, that is, the perfection of functioning; they are valuable not merely as the sources of agreeable affections. Once more, all pleasure is mixed with pain; hence, since pain is unacceptable as a moral end, its associate must also be rejected. Yet feeling has its instrumental values; it indicates whether and when the body is in a state of health, whether and when the soul is at rest. Can wisdom do better as the ultimate moral good? Socrates seemed to say, Yes. Plato answers, No. He has no doubt that wisdom will be needed to understand and realize the meaning of the end. Definition implies consistency of ideas, freedom from contradiction and correspondence with reality. But does logical consistency always issue in truly moral behavior? Thus, suppose we argue that the acquisition of private wealth is compatible with the progress of the state. If rich men grasp the reins of power, the state will surely ride to a fall. Defense, the essence of which is courage, comes not from abundance of treasure but from the skill and loyalty of the disciplined troops. We discover that the argument is faulty because the first proposition is wrong. The welfare of the state does not permit the unlimited concentration of material goods; its unity is threatened just as soon as one group usurps authority in a field not belonging to its function.⁵ What Plato means will be seen from the subsequent discussion.

The mind of man possesses three distinguishable faculties, impulse, emotion, intellect. It is impossible to select one of these as the supreme end of endeavor, to the exclusion of the others. The functional method demands that we first recognize the unity of the soul, giving each faculty its due and rightful place in the activity of the whole. Experience, however, shows that desires are continually in a state of change; we hunger or we thirst; we are drawn to an object or retreat from it; we love or we hate; we are daring

⁵ "Republic," p. 422.

or reserved. These are natural states, without moral value. When they conflict, a moral tension ensues and must be relieved. Plato has painted the picture with consummate skill in the fourth book of the "Republic."⁶ Unity cannot be found in desires or emotions by themselves. It is only when reason enters that we learn *what* we ought to desire, *how* we ought to be moved. This presupposes an end beyond desire and emotion, which then serves as a standard of judgment. The ultimate good is the perfect functioning of the faculties of the self. To secure this end is the ideal set up by the moralist. Plato likens the soul to a musical scale, the lower notes being taken by the desires for food, progeny, and material goods, the middle intervals being filled by the affections which sweep towards the upper rather than the lower, the noble rather than the base, the higher notes registering the commands of reason—what we *ought* to do. We have, then, not only perfect unity but a balanced harmony of conscious action. A man so dominated will be, as Professor Nettleship says, a man of *principle*, a man with the *prime* idea, the idea that organizes the lust for life, the passions of love and hate, the critical curiosity of the intellect, into the symmetrical behavior of a moral agent. This idea is what we should now call *soundness of character*.

(b) The good is embodied in the virtues. What is a virtue? The answer hinges on the concept of purpose which he has adopted as the ground of all definition. Thus, the eye has as its end the production of vision. This is its peculiar "excellence." The soul also has its proper end, which no other power in the organism can fulfill. Perfection of moral function is reached by means of virtue. Virtue is plainly a "power" of the mind, at one time latent, at another time passing out into moral energy.⁷ Thus, courage may primarily be considered as the tendency to perform daring acts without an intelligent understanding of their significance. Such acts are purely spontaneous, without moral quality; yet it is from this native capacity that true courage even-

⁶ P. 435, *et seq.*

⁷ "Republic," p. 353.

tually arises. Because the mind possesses the power of reflection as one of its coördinate faculties, no act of man can be truly complete, that is, *moral*, except as it is interpreted by the intellect. If this be clearly understood, we shall escape the fallacies of the Naturalists of Plato's day. They held that morality is the unhindered exercise of the soul's inherent powers. The one test of justice, for instance, is my ability to satisfy my desires to the greatest extent. Hence, to suffer injustice, that is, to sustain a check to my private gains, is intrinsically evil. Social justice is a compromise; it is to be tolerated, not as a good, but as a lesser evil. It deserves our esteem simply because we cannot single-handed obtain perfect satisfaction of our personal interests; but, by means of a system of laws, we are enabled to restrain other men from undue trespass. It is therefore within our rights to make an action *appear* good whether it be so or not. Reputation, not essential character, is the thing that counts. "If though unjust I acquire a repute for justice, then a truly celestial state will be mine."⁸ In order to refute the allegations of Naturalism, Plato offers a scientific account of the deduction of the virtues.

The elementary virtues are associated with the appetitive part of the soul. When is the desire for food, sex, property, a strictly moral motive? Analysis proves that the immediate "good" is doubly relative, first, to the condition of the agent at the moment, secondly, to the state of empirical maturity. We deal, however, with men, not beasts; that is to say, the impulse is confronted with the idea of the ultimate end. Two antagonistic principles thus do battle, and the moral settlement takes place only when the agent develops the virtue of self-control, the peculiar virtue of the appetitive faculty. The second set of virtues is emotional—the dramatic motives, the enthusiasm of the chase, the valiancy of fight, fortitude amid the perils of the deep—in fine, courage, which knows the danger and faces it without flinching; courage, the virtue that evinces an appreciation of time and

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 359, *et seq.*

reality, that understands human life and its limitations, yet can estimate the worth of life in the drama of eternity. The third virtue is wisdom, the discriminating sense in moral experience. It detects the disturbances in appetite, feeling, and intellect, and applies the principle of restoration. All appetites, all emotions, all intellectual exertions, are valid at times; in moments of stress, some check is needed—some caution, counsel, inspiration—and wisdom assumes its right to control. The philosophic mind is the one sure mold into which this moral virtue may be cast.⁹

The three functions of the mind are thus analyzed and the appropriate virtue assigned to each. Still, conduct is not split into three divergent forms; it appears to us and to observers as a single, unitary process. Must not the unity of soul have a virtue also? What other than justice itself? Popular definitions of the concept are plainly inexact; justice is paying one's debts, awarding benefits to friends and detriments to foes, even "attending to one's own business." Wait a moment; perhaps this last axiom is correct. If it implies that one man does not depend upon another for his salient purposes but has them in his own possession, then we could ask for no better definition. "Justice is the possessing and using what belongs to a man." If this be true, the citizen need not seek the particular virtue of a Pericles or a Themistocles; he should do the duty belonging to his own station, as merchant, warrior, or guardian of the state. Justice is the moral coördinator; it redresses the balance which has been shifted by erroneous calculation. Good fellowship emboldens the guests to drink beyond their capacity, imperiling physical health and personal honor. Justice steps in and scatters the confusion by its prescriptive commands. In its direction of the three functional virtues, it makes the conduct of man coherent, straightforward, effective. While we may question whether Plato is justified in extending the meaning of the term beyond the customary limits of application, still we cannot deny that in deducing

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

the several virtues he has exhibited an adroitness of analysis and wealth of imagination that make his treatment epochal in the history of moral thought.

(c) Since man is a social being and must act in concert with his fellows, it is essential to understand the organization of the state, which is the area of moral practice. There are three elements in the state, corresponding to the three basic needs, economic support, collective defense, and rational government. These segments agree in every respect with the three divisions of the soul. True social virtue is found in the discharge of the several functions, each by its own class. It is required that the artisan remain strictly within the sphere of his own duties, that the warrior apply himself to the preparation for and conduct of war, that the governor devote himself to the task of administering the state. Several significant questions may be raised by the modern reader. Does a system like this deprive the moral agent of his private initiative? Can a tri-segmented order maintain its balance in the entangled conditions, mechanical and governmental, under which the modern man is forced to live? Is it a wise policy to train young men specifically for the business of civil administration? Is it fair to guarantee an elaborate education to a small portion, even though a severe examination for admission to the group should be used, and the group assembled from every grade of society?

The real problem before the author is the mental and moral preparation of any citizen for his position as a responsible member of the state. Hence, while he adduces the principles ostensibly for the training of executives, he is seeking to lift the level of moral endeavor above the purely instinctive modes of reaction. The curriculum proposed is exceedingly suggestive. The candidate for virtue must have the advantage of a superior birth, not through indiscriminate sex relations, but by a careful observance of the rules of supervised selection. The education of the child should be appropriate to his needs and capacities. Children think in concrete terms; hence, the first forms of knowledge must be æsthetic, the products of art—literature, music, and

painting, each of these having its own disciplinary values. When perception, memory, and imagination have been duly developed, the preceptor must turn to the reflective powers. Scientific method now takes the place of simple response to stimuli. It gives us an acquaintance not with the appearance of things but the reality. Mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, discover the basic laws of motion and interpret them in terms of the principle of number. Finally, the mind is led to the study of dialectics as the means for determining the ultimate ideas of reason. The serious business of constructing a rational character is now before the student. For the prospective leader, the duty is twofold—for himself and the social group. He must know his own mind; he must know also the mental processes of his fellow citizens. He must, in short, deduce and apply the maxim strikingly formulated by Dewey: "We live mentally and physically only in *and* because of our environment."¹⁰ Whether the citizen be a chosen ruler or a private worker, his responsibility is clear. It is the part of wisdom to educate him fully for the difficult tasks ahead.¹¹

3. Aristotle's Development of the Functional Method.

The attitude of the author towards his subject mirrors to some extent the genius of his own temperament. Plato, while the severest of logicians, is also the man of vision. Aristotle is the practical man of affairs. He deals primarily with the particular, not with the universal. The syllogism is a triumph of analytical skill; it is valueless if it cannot untangle the knotty problems of social intercourse. We must in every case begin with facts, and we should at all times keep our feet on the ground. Yet, though the two men seem to be far apart in personal characteristics, they are essentially in agreement on the major questions of moral theory. It is therefore needful to point out only the differences of emphasis in the use of the functional method.

¹⁰ "Human Nature and Conduct," p. 327.

¹¹ "Republic," Bks. II and VII.

(a) "Man," says Aristotle in the "Politics," "is by nature a political animal, and anyone who is not a citizen of any state—the 'clanless, lawless, hearthless' of Homer—is either superhuman or else too low in culture to be assimilated by any community."¹² The thesis which he defends is that the state is logically prior to the individual, and that therefore the individual must be defined in the terms of his social character. He rejects the concept of a state of nature and a civil contract. Men do not have to *learn* to act in conjunction with their associates; they do so in accordance with the principles of their own minds. Thus, justice is originally a social virtue, and its application by Plato to the organization of the individual mind is unwarranted. Again, justice is not a conventional term, a mode of action agreed upon by contending groups; it is the expression of the habitual thought of the community. Men have always lived in communities; they find their pleasure in mutual intercourse; they devise plans for the safeguarding of common interests. The state is the objective witness to man's appreciation of the worth of living.

Nor is this all. The argument for the social basis of morality draws its strength from the psychology of development. Man is defective in the discharge of his functions if he is found beyond the confines of society. Thus, the principle of private property can be applied only in civil communities. It has certain empirical values which justify its adoption by the state. It tends to bring out the personal dignity of the owner by giving him a distinct place of importance in the group. It also enables him to cultivate his benevolent instincts. These facts are supported by the axiom of logic that the whole is prior to the part. The circle is necessary to its segments, the body to its members. The term citizen has no meaning except as defined by the functions of the state. A citizen stands in contrast to the slave. The slave is not an integer of the state; he is the state's instrument. The slavish mind acts by impulse; hence, there are many poten-

¹² Bk. I, Ch. 2.

tial slaves who are not legally marked. But the citizen is conscious of his position and duty in society. Morality is a social process, and no man can expect to attain a good character save as he pursues his work within the bounds of the civil commonwealth.

(b) Every action looks to an end and institutes means to attain it. This is the axiom adopted in every department of knowledge. The purpose of medicine is the restoration of the health of the patient; the end towards which the strategy of the general is directed is the winning of victory for the state. But the Good cannot be a logical concept, as Plato defined it; it must be a working rule, different from the rules of medicine or economics, and yet contained in them. Thus, the maintenance of health is a different matter from the realization of manhood. Hence we must admit that the goods of health, economic plenty, and defense of the state are subordinate goods; they look to an architectonic principle, which Aristotle calls *Eudaimonia* (Εὐδαιμονία), good-spiritedness, welfare, happiness in the broadest sense, the fulfillment of the "function" of the agent. He supposes that his architectonic principle is different from Plato's; it is at root the same. Both reject the volatile satisfactions of the moment; both deny the right of one faculty to dictate the rules of action for the others. Their treatment of the principle of pleasure shows very insignificant differences. Perhaps Aristotle, true to his genius, inclines to emphasize more freely the value of feeling as a subsidiary test of goodness in action. But he insists in every case that the aim before us is the discharge of a mental function, not the enjoyment of pleasure or aversion from pain. The effusion of pleasant feelings will tell us whether the sensory or reflective capacity has followed its own rules and impinged on its appropriate objects. These conditions are of cardinal importance in all mental exertion, in none more decisively than in moral conduct. But the main point is not whether the quality of the feeling is good, but whether the object sought conforms to intrinsic needs of the soul. Hence, true moral activity can only spring from the right kind of

choice, that is, a choice governed by the fundamental purposes of the soul.¹³

What, then, is the real meaning of Eudæmonism? Human welfare cannot be identical with the physical needs of men, the powers of nutrition and reproduction; man has these in common with plants. Nor can we identify it with the reactions of the senses; animals exhibit the same behavior as men. Welfare is not equivalent to life; the Spencerian dogma is refuted before it is made. It must then be the creation of reason; it has to do with the development of the rational judgment; it is judgment in its practical, that is, its moral, form. It refers to human powers when those powers are most highly developed. Aristotle draws the distinction which Kant later adopts, a theoretical reason and a practical reason or insight. Morality is the dynamic force of intellect at work on the problems of social life. Hence, we must not give ear to men who affirm that an end like this is the shadow of goodness; that would be little more than the logical principle of Plato's system. Aristotle answers with certitude that the Good is real. Every other purpose—wealth, sense gratification, military glory—is partial and evanescent; this end is real, because it represents the complete equipment of mind and body and is expressed in the only judgment that counts, the judgment of action. In fact, the essence of such a purpose is that it *can be put into practice*. It is different from the natural *wish* of the Cyrenaics; it goes far beyond the logical abstraction of Plato. Moral sagacity accepts only purposes that can be fulfilled. We may not expect that the fulfillment will be exact; the field of moral operation has none of the sharp lines of demarcation that we find in mechanics. Ethics is not a science of rigid rules and precise measurements. Yet the principle of the End may be applied; hence, we should be careful to learn its fundamental terms.¹⁴

(c) If every moral action looks to an end, it must possess the properties that will enable it to express the good. What

¹³ "Ethics," Bk. X, Ch. 2-4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 6.

is it that makes an act virtuous? Much effort has been expended by ethical writers to make the meaning of the word plain. It would be difficult to put the case more concisely than Aristotle does. To be virtuous, (i) we must know what we are doing, (ii) we must do it by deliberate choice, and (iii) we must shape the act according to a constant and unchanging type of moral habit.

First (i), the moral act is the act of an intelligent mind; it cannot be done by a savage, nor by a child, though he, because of his latent powers of discernment, may be said to have a sort of native virtue; nor by a slave, who is inferior both in mental quality and social position. The moral act is performed by a mind which possesses insight, the authority of reason, an intuition that gives immediate understanding of the good. At the same time, it does not yield an infallible imperative; it requires that the agent consider the conditions under which the act is to be done, allowing for the possibility of mistakes, for the peculiar traits of temperament, for the maturity or immaturity of experience. It is a "constructive and commanding energy" that enables a man to act justly because his aim is good, not because he happens to do an act which in its consequences is regarded as just.¹⁵

The second (ii) element in virtuous action is choice as opposed to instinctive, unreflecting appetite. Aristotle anticipates with remarkable precision the precepts of the modern school. We do not blame a child for his burst of temper, but we indicate how it may be controlled. The original emotions, love and hate, fear and anger, have no moral character; they are the stuff out of which character is built. Will is the natural energy of consciousness; it is directed by moral judgment in one particular way—to choose the right and reject the wrong. Virtue and vice are in our power. Lawmakers have accepted that principle, for they have set appropriate sanctions to the law's violation. Private sentiment follows the same line of argument; a man is able to choose, because he *does* choose. Hence, it censures

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, VI, 11-13.

the vicious deed and praises the virtuous. If virtue be the effect of choice, vice must be also. We have equal responsibility for both.

The Stoics parted company with Aristotle at this point. Virtue could mean but one thing—compliance with the laws of nature. Hence, their insistent prayer was: “Thy will, O Nature, be my will.” Virtuous action is natural action, that is, the operation of reason. But what is vice? Is it also inherent in nature? How could two contradictory forces exist in the same thing? The dilemma is sharp: either we are constrained by law to act viciously, and then there is neither will nor morality; or we must follow the Socratic lead and plead ignorance. The Stoics accepted the latter alternative. Two forces strive for mastery, impulse and reason; both belong to nature, but reason somehow represents the universal power and should therefore be obeyed. The deviation from Aristotle is not successful. If choice is given, it is the mind that chooses and choice makes the act truly moral.

Granted, then, that choice is given, how shall it be made? We are introduced here to one of the most celebrated methods in moral theory. Virtue is the *mean* between two extremes. In mathematics there are absolute ratios: 2 is to 6 as 6 is to 10. In musical harmony certain notes occupy a medial relation in the harmonic scale. The means are fixed, unchanging. Other ratios change with the change of condition, and virtue is one of these. Virtue cannot be deduced from logical premises; if it could, it would embody a perfect mean (middle term). It attains its moral values by considering the time, personal condition, external relations, manner of performing the act, and the intrinsic reasons for it. This is a program to stagger the most optimistic reformer. We can make the test by comparing the extremes with the mean. Courage stands midway between cowardice and recklessness, both of which—deficiency and excess—are beyond the bounds of virtue. It is just possible that, if a man errs on the side of excess, he may still be within the field of easy moral recovery. Aristotle concludes that, with all the aid that mathematics can give, the qualitative contents of a

particular virtuous act can only be approximately determined.¹⁸

The third (iii) condition of virtue is that it represents a constant type of moral habit. The Greek word is the same as the Latin, *habitus*—a strong and deliberate resistance to change, a desire and intention to build up an harmonious character. Again and again, Aristotle says that a man becomes just by acting justly. Virtue is habit, not insight, not unmoralized instinct. But no man can act justly by repeated exertion except as he already has a settled thought, a determined judgment, behind his successive deeds. Character and conduct are the obverse sides of the same moral fact. Conduct does not produce character, nor character, conduct; they grow together. Just action confirms the justness of a man's character, while just character defines the form of moral action. Hence, the licentious man cannot become suddenly temperate and be thought at once a virtuous man. No apparently virtuous act is truly virtuous if the underlying *habitus* be bad. Mere objective goodness cannot change the final moral complexion of the act; because behind the glow of beauty in the so-called noble act, the sinister fires of hate may be burning sullenly.

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¹⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 5; VI, 1.

CHAPTER VII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PURPOSE

Spinoza

The "Ethics" of Spinoza was composed in the quiet of a philosopher's study. It is essentially a book for the thinker; its very language makes its appreciation by the common mind quite impossible. This does not mean that he treats of matters that are dissociated from everyday experience. Despite the technical form of the book, he devotes his attention to issues that confront the humblest citizen. He is in constant touch with the prevailing currents of thought, and he subjects them to the most searching analysis. What impresses the reader of the "Ethics" is that moral conduct is the key to the study of logic and philosophy. If Spinoza were living now, he would include the objective sciences. Hence, he believes that we can "explain by strict logical reasoning those very moral habits which many writers hold to be contrary to reason," referring to impulse and emotion; and he proposes to introduce order into both by showing that they obey certain necessary laws which can be discovered and stated. Spinoza has the practical mind of an Aristotle and the universalizing intellect of a Plato. On one principle he insists, namely, that human consciousness is not outside the realm of nature; it forms no *imperium in imperio*, a kingdom within a kingdom, as Descartes taught. There is but one substance in the universe; it has two attributes, body and mind, extension and thought. When man acts, he expresses both ideas and feelings; one belongs to mind, the other to body. In one case we read his conduct as a group of logical principles; in the other, as the natural operation of a highly sensitized nervous system. It is folly,

then, to "mock, lament, or execrate" the sudden play of emotions; we should rather as scientific thinkers make it our business to find out what they mean.

1. Freedom as the Essence of Moral Conduct.

The problem of conduct is essentially the problem of human freedom. The historic doctrine alleged that man is free, by right of origin and nature, to form his own character. The fact that he can, unaided, distinguish between right and wrong clinches the doctrine's validity. Spinoza undertook to destroy this fallacy by the experimental evidence of the laboratory.

(a) What are the hidden links of bondage in the life of man? We begin with the body as a whole. It is not an independent individual in the world of nature; like every other body, it is but a unit in the unbroken continuum of matter. It owes its present existence to the action of other bodies through the process of generation and acquires from them the same powers and tendencies. In one respect, man, in company with all other organisms, possesses a principle which stone or sand does not exhibit, namely, life. However, even here the maintenance of the individual continues to depend upon the bodies within its own environment; if food is not procurable, the organism perishes. In the higher species finely-framed sense organs have developed, yet these are not sufficient to themselves; they must react to stimuli, and the retention of images is a matter of physical record. The degree of freedom at this point is slight; but the animal may, at least, try to select the kind of object it needs for the satisfaction of its physical wants.

But when the mental process is reached, we should certainly expect to find ample evidence of free motion. What are the facts? Every observer admits that the common physiological changes are beyond our control; some are automatic, some are reflex; the lungs breathe, the blood circulates, food digests—without our help. Memory seems to be a more voluntary function than perception, but we have

only to attempt the recall of a "lost" image to learn how extremely limited is our power. In fact, the ancient doctrine of will is untrue. There is no independent and all-conquering force that bids us act or refrain at its own behest. Men think they order the shapes and sequences of fancy, that they direct the inferences of thought, that they utter their ideas in speech by decision of will. The judgment fails of proof; "they who believe they speak or keep silent by free election of will do but dream with their eyes open."¹ If the elementary acts of cognition are not free, must we say the same about the desires and emotions which form the materials of moral behavior? Desire, Spinoza answers, is an impulse of soul, a *conatus* (endeavor), a fixed quantum, an appetite governed exclusively by the needs of the organism. But desire breaks up into a series of special appetitions—ambition, revenge, emulation, avarice—each of which is the unguided response to the stimulating object. The hand that strikes is a part of the desiderative and emotional complex of resentment. The James-Lange theory of emotion is anticipated with a remarkable degree of likeness. Men do not in the secret recesses of mind decide to indulge in a fury of feeling; they merely love, hate, hope, fear. No one can read Spinoza's treatment of this theme in the third and fourth books of the "Ethics" without being profoundly impressed with his grasp on the basic principles of human psychology.

But the account is not yet complete. The liberty of choice is further circumscribed by man's relation to his fellows. Contrary to the opinion of Aristotle, Spinoza holds that "man is not fit for citizenship but must be made so."² His hand by nature is against his neighbor; he is therefore in a state of fear, and fear sterilizes the finer emotions. It forbids the settlement of debatable issues on the basis of common purposes. While conflict or the tendency to conflict exists, there can be no freedom. Freedom implies the restraints of law; yet law which guarantees the social equilibrium is itself a kind of bondage. Civil freedom must be

¹ "Ethics," trans. by Elwees, Bohn edition, Bk. III, Prop. 2, Scholium.

² "Tractatus Politicus," Ch. 5, Sec. 2.

substituted for individual license; the rules of honor and benevolence must supplant the efforts of the individual to realize his own private ends.

(b) What, then, is freedom and how may it be attained? Freedom does not reside in the logical discernment of truth; if it did, very few mortals could grasp its terms. It certainly does not lie in the unchecked riot of feeling. Spinoza rejects the Hedonism and Intellectualism which Plato also rejected.³ Freedom is the fulfillment of our fundamental purposes in accordance with an exact understanding of their worth. The method is therefore functional; but function now refers, not to the arbitrary division of the soul into three separate compartments, but to the action of every original tendency according to its specific powers. Every mental act is in part free, in part not free. As a fact of body, it is not free; as a fact of mind, it develops freedom in proportion to the maturity of intellectual experience. It should be borne in mind that Spinoza's freedom is utterly different from the freedom of Kant. In Spinoza, freedom is at once and forever associated with desire—which is a mental as well as a physical fact. Therefore, we must study the meaning of purpose.

The primary purpose of man is the desire for self-preservation, the will to live. This purpose he holds in common with all other organic bodies, vegetable as well as animal. His freedom begins with the assertion of this fundamental principle, as appears in the way he fashions substances of his environment into suitable kinds of food or in the way he gratifies the desires of sex in the propagation of his kind. But freedom is narrow because the purpose is simple. His purpose grows more comprehensive as we study the forms of sense perception and motor discharge. These represent "desires" that plant life does not possess. The functions of the organism have increased in number and variety and, consequently, in freedom. In the higher animals, means are structurally related to ends; for example,

³ The reader is referred to my "Freedom and Purpose; the Psychology of Spinoza," for further discussion of this phase of the subject.

bird and man have the building instinct in common; they not only seek an end but have the means for reaching it. The uninstructed mind supposes that the decision to build is the result of careful reflection; we picture to ourselves the "conveniences of household life" and proceed to provide the necessary instruments to that end. Obviously, the degree of freedom as expressed in the act has risen considerably.

In one department of purposive action, man is unique; he can reflect. This gives him his special type of freedom, which many thinkers have taken as the single meaning of the term. Spinoza does not argue that freedom in the use of the secondary impulses is complete freedom; that would grant the contention of the Naturalists of Plato's day. He insists that human thought is expressible only through the constitutional desires, and in that position he is right. The type-purposes of man's nature furnish the groundwork of moral character. The difference between man and animal lies here: man conceives the end before he strives for it; it is to him the *end-in-view*. "To all actions whereto we are determined by feeling when the mind is passive, we can be determined without feeling by reason."⁴ The hand strikes—this is the act of impulse; the hand strikes *to hurt*—this is the judgment of the understanding. The reflective power represents the decided advance of man over his animal associates. They can only perform the act; he can interpret its significance. Freedom now is equipped with the capacity for apprehending the future. The reflective man foresees the value of a particular action; he can conceive the properties of a "type-character," a pattern of human nature as he thinks it *ought to be*, the ideal form of the good man with his virtues and his rewards. He also feels moving within himself a greater "power" of action; that is to say, his motivation towards virtuous behavior yields a new appreciation of reality, a deeper sense of satisfaction,⁵ afterwards called by Butler the "pleasures of conscience." The mind

⁴ "Ethics," IV, 59.

⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, Preface.

rearranges his environment to fit the new ideal. The social consciousness now becomes stabilized; interests—the objective side of purpose—now become common. Men can seek for and possess the same thing, which, however, is not material but intellectual—love, mutual appreciation, justice, equity, harmony. This is due in large measure to the subtle development of the vehicle of exchange. Speech for the civilized man is a system of general terms, not concrete symbols of external objects. All these elements of progress have joined to enhance the capacity for freedom. Freedom is the proper use of purposes which the agent knows himself to have.

Is the doctrine of Spinoza successful? Does it explain the meaning of the term and show its scope of application? The following facts are plain: Freedom can only apply to powers which man constitutionally possesses; reflection cannot change or curtail the nature of any inherent impulse, for example, jealousy, which can be curbed but not eradicated; free reflection can create an ideal of conduct, but it cannot assure its ultimate adoption; freedom is not separate from either desire or reflection, both of which are types of purpose; freedom increases in degree from the lowest purpose, the preservation of life, to reflection, the highest. The difficulty which the theory meets is primarily one of logic. If freedom is affixed to the individual purpose and if it increases with the development of that purpose in behavior, we may ask whether we have any room left for the concept of moral responsibility. The criticism of Kuno Fischer is entitled to consideration. He holds that moral action, under this scheme, would be a logical determination of whether or not our ideas on the specific form of behavior have become clear. But since clear ideas, following the necessary laws of logic, constitute virtue and command the assent of will, we may properly inquire if there is any place left for free choice. The assumption that Spinoza makes is that man is individual and acts individually. While his purposes are distributed into various groups, there is a single *conatus* that still rules. Hence, the agent is not desiderative or emo-

tional or rational; he does not exhibit one faculty now, another later; he is one consciousness showing both reason and desire; he is one substance, mind and body acting always so as to elicit the total power of manhood. The responsibility, therefore, belongs to the synthetic mind which we shall later call Self.

2. The Formation of Character.

Freedom is the function of purpose; if purpose be given, it must issue in some sort of freedom. How may moral freedom be reached? The operation of the type-impulse is not enough, if we assume that impulse acts always in the same way. Then, all behavior would be equal and freedom would become a beautiful shadow, not a fact. Experience, however, belongs to the individual man, to Socrates, Plato, Aristotle; it reflects the opinions of particular minds. As has been said in another connection, "Men do not conduct their business, perform their social duties, ponder on the deep things of philosophy, as though they were satisfying the impulses of the race."⁶ The moral aims of a man begin with himself, as do all other aims. The spurs of experience may run into the habits of society, but it is from the needs of a single person that they get their edge and potency. Hence, we must study the elements of private character.

(a) Character is based on two approved principles, heredity and environment. Man, Spinoza affirmed, is an integral unit in his world; neither man nor the world can exist, the one without the other. Early impressions are made on the mind without permission of or control by our will. We are in no position to interfere while some of the strongest lines of character are being drawn. Nor can we direct in the slightest way the early development of inherited traits. Spinoza insists that we come into the world with a fixed equipment, our own defined essence. The tendencies of birth exercise an extraordinary influence in shap-

⁶ "Freedom and Purpose," p. 49.

ing the course of experience. A man is inclined to attribute his own type of character, especially if it be honorable (or successful), to a carefully conceived plan of action, while in point of fact the plan grew out of a trend of behavior which he only gradually recognized as his own. Thus, the gulf between the drunkard and the sage is not fixed by the conscious design of either. Neither determined the original tendency. Hence, behavior in its infant stages is without moral value, precisely as Aristotle said. It is the later assent to its terms or the attempt to make radical changes in them, when reflection becomes active, that enables a man to call his habitual form of action *moral*. Hence, too, character is not a stipulated program whose every item has been systematically executed under the direction of a superintending mind; it is at the start automatic, without schematization, not even acknowledged as our own.

Yet character is the sole theater for the enactment of the decrees of freedom, moral freedom, freedom that the discipline of virtue produces. If we can't be free here, we can't be anywhere. How does character generate freedom? By reason. Reason has two distinctive properties: it can compute the exact result of a given course of action and it can decide which powers of mind are needed to obtain it. Feeling can yield no such result; its determinations are confused, changing, perplexing. Reason examines the sources of desires, the fundamental purposes, and then decides whether they should operate at the given time. In order to do so, it requires a knowledge of our ultimate good. When is character harmonious? When does freedom issue from its enactments? These are questions that hang upon the meaning of the moral end. The supreme end of man is not merely physical existence, for animals have that. The test of moral progress will depend on what particular ends we have set up for attainment. End, says Spinoza, is what is "useful" to us; this is not the goal of the Utilitarian. We do not desire an object because it is good; *it is good because we desire it*. A man's *interest* in money, fame, knowledge, benevolence, makes the object *good*. But what determines the

object as the specific end? It is the type of character already attained. Hence, true character means the training of desires to meet the good of the man as a whole.

(b) The training of character in virtue is a form of the practical dialectic. The thesis represents the desires, the emotional stresses, with which all experience begins; the antithesis is the ideal of conduct which the agent adopts as his standard of judgment; the synthesis is embraced in the actual achievements in virtuous behavior, and this we call character. The process in developing the dialectic is extremely slow; it is pursued with great effort and is marked by anguish of spirit. Two particular situations confront the serious thinker. One is the temptation to excess. We crowd our mind with reactions of a specific type; we become men of one idea. If this idea be loyalty to truth, no great harm is done, since it catches up other kindred concepts and carries them along with it. If, however, the tendency be vicious, as when the sybarite accepts the enticements of bodily pleasures, never reasoning out their effects on the finer sensibilities of the soul, no one can compute the damage done to the character which is in process of formation. The moral dialectic passes with much difficulty beyond this point; but it will pass if the antithesis is cordially supported and clearly defined. The second hindrance is the presence of contradictions, the struggle between what is and what ought to be. Spinoza mentions some of the contradictions, between love of life and lust of possession; for example, merchants amid the tempests of the sea try to save their goods at the expense of their lives. The conflict is often between antithetical emotions, love and hate, forgiveness and revenge, encouragement and envy. The most tragic tales in moral endeavor are recorded here. The decision is made according to the scheme of character already set up. The ease with which we realize the principles of the ideal type is the index to the degree of freedom attained. This is as true of the criminal as of the saint. Constitutionally, a man is as free to do evil as to do good; but this natural freedom is soon circumscribed by the actual igno-

rance of man's true moral goal. Ignorance, as we have seen, is servitude; hence, a vicious career which takes the wrong kind of an end—the end of the senses—hampers the development of character. Such a man is not free to do the one thing that alone satisfies the needs of the soul; namely, he cannot act without injury to his fellows.

3. The Realization of Self.

The freedom thus far attained distinguishes one person from another. Freedom belongs to the kind of character produced. We must now study man *apart from men*—the fact of Self. Spinoza thinks that here we need a new sort of understanding; not reflective judgment by scientific categories which determine the value of desires and emotions, but direct intuition, the mind apprehending its synthetic unity. For the mind is one, an indissoluble whole. Multiple personality does not exist; it merely represents the several aspects of a single consciousness. The outward sign of unity is the human body. Furthermore, the system of ideas is unitary; all ideas are conceived “under a certain form of eternity,”⁷ that is, with a consistent meaning to the series. There is nothing in nature that may not thus be understood by mind; as Aristotle would say, everything belongs to a class. The universals which stand at the top of the list are those of morals—goodness, justice, honor, virtue. The character of a man is, in fact, the meaning, the universal significance, of his behavior. When this principle is reached, we have the concept and fact of Selfhood. Selfhood must be interpreted as the supreme interest in and love for the immutable essence of nature, which is God.⁸ How shall we attain to that height in actual experience?

The dialectic of self-realization is now unfolded. It follows the same path as the earlier; in fact, it is the same moral process viewed from a universal standpoint, not merely the standpoint of the individual agent. The process

⁷ “Ethics,” V, 29, Sch.

⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 20, Sch.

is infinite in form, as befits the lofty terms of Spinoza's idealism; it therefore makes a place for divine "experience." But our interest lies in the lower register. We seek to know how the understanding of the true nature of man, his ultimate Self, can affect his attitude towards the moral problems we are obliged to settle. Let us inspect a simple reaction, for example, pain. Pain takes its meaning from the nature of mind. It is not a stranger in the realm of matter; it is here by right; it has a definite service to perform. Thus, the diseases of body, disorders of mind, poverty, war, injustice, hidden and malefic craft, are necessary elements in nature; they are not products of man's unaided whim. The fact of death has always been the source of violent and painful reactions; it has had its bitter "sting." But death is a biological principle; it has its inevitable place in the order of nature; it is the standing proof of the validity of the law of causality. Yet the wise man, the man of true freedom, is concerned not with the fact of death but with the kind of life lived before it comes. Spinoza accepts the reign of another law, a teleological law, that the moral purposes of man survive the dissolution of the body—they are eternal. Hence, death is not an end; it is a means to the end, life.

The moral dialectic is also pursued in the sphere of social intercourse. Men are at one on two points, their mental endowments and their preferred destiny. Hence, they must study the methods of expressing that oneness in civil action. The security of a state can never rest on a negative foundation, namely, fear; it must cultivate mutual trust. Thus, equal opportunity for the promotion of the arts and crafts, the development of economic wealth, the exchange of goods, is the true test of the soundness of the social order. The dialectic leads to a civil manhood, healthy in body and mind, which is free to organize measures for the pursuit of justice. Mutual confidence and wisdom in decision unite to express the principle of social harmony, the coöperation of all citizens in furthering the common interests of the group. It is obvious that Spinoza, though withdrawn from public

affairs himself, sees no adequate basis for the realization of moral selfhood apart from the influences of society.

We reach at length the highest point in the dialectic, man's outlook on universal nature. We call it religion, but must not forget that religion is built on the platform of moral experience and that it may include the most intimate æsthetic impressions, as our sense of beauty of the natural world. Religion is both personal and universal; it postulates a Self, the Ego of my inner intuition; it also links the Self immediately to the whole. Time and place have no weight in determining the nature of religion. If the free fancy of the mind enables men, while still in the body, to visit the unexplored recesses of the stellar universe, moral freedom disregards the deficiencies of power and the conflict of motives and centers its thought upon the authority and compelling beauty of love. Hence, religion is not confined by creed or dogma, church or ritual; it seeks expansion in the fluid personality of man. "Love towards God"—that is, towards the universal powers of nature—"cannot be turned into hate." It is contrasted with the affections men have called sacred, towards wife and child, friend and colleague; these are strong under some conditions; they may, however, be turned into indifference or even hate. Universal faith, which can be grounded only in reason, must abide. The road to freedom is exceedingly hard, and few have trodden its path. "But all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare."

We may disregard the criticisms often heard that Spinoza makes an unwarranted application of religious concepts to the practice of morality; that he sets up ideals of conduct which no one can follow; that he introduces a mode of formulating moral duties that is alien to the principle of private sovereignty. Such a criticism might be valid if he were discussing the ordinary types of religious thought. In point of fact, he thinks of religion as the crowning phase of human endeavor, whether in science or in morals. It does not introduce an alien canon, a God beyond the scenes; it carries men's thought slowly up the ascent until the uni-

versal principle is grasped. The more important question is, does this method convert morals into a study of logical rules? If it does, as Fischer claims, then it may be a diverting intellectual exercise; but it cannot be a guide to action in the struggle for moral goodness. Yet Spinoza insists that he is examining the desires and emotions, the purposive principles of human effort. Purpose is vain without a supervisory and authoritative self; we can only find the self in the coöperation of desires to a common end. Utilitarian and idealist alike demand such a synthetic power in mind. Nothing has meaning without it. Sanctions are mechanical devices, intentions are automatic reactions, if they are not stirred by authority, which knows how to obey and chooses to do so. Hence, while the form of his argument in certain phases may be too highly refined, its substance agrees with the requirements of experience. He has at least placed the doctrine of freedom where it belongs, among the salient problems of moral conduct to be studied and tentatively settled at every moment of moral crisis.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE SYNTHETIC METHOD

Its Form

There now lie before us two distinct methods of judging moral conduct, each of them with its elements of strength and its palpable weaknesses. It should not be overlooked that scholarly minds of the first rank have woven their genius into the discussion and that representative leaders of opinion and action in every age have been deeply impressed by their arguments. Hedonism has been associated most frequently with the interests of art, Intellectualism with the aspirations of religion. Both have at times won their way into the complexities of jurisprudence. If we were called upon to decide, from private and public effects, which method has the greater chance of survival, no categorical answer could be made. The issue is confused by two factors, the first, that ethical theory is apt to reflect the temperamental idiosyncrasies of the subject. The artist, for instance, must consult his feelings very largely in assessing the beauty, the æsthetic worth, of a picture or statue. He waits for no objection to be raised against applying the same method to a moral situation. The man of religion seeks for direct judgment of right and wrong, being accustomed to render direct homage of worship and receive, as he thinks, direct acknowledgment thereof.

At the same time, neither method insures a consistent application of its terms. Thus, Sidgwick affirms that prudence, benevolence, and equity are necessary instruments in every satisfaction, especially that identified with the name of Utilitarianism. Benevolence is the moral equivalent of

the natural impulse of sympathy.¹ It is not an instrumental good; it belongs to the structure of character. Its values cannot depend on the amount of pleasure derived; it cannot be designated as a "present lesser good" or a "future greater good;" quantity is not the term that reflects its meaning. Hence, we have in Hedonism a method that faces both ways, towards the fundamental urge of consciousness and the practical consequences of action.

It is our purpose to show that, instead of committing a serious blunder, as some have alleged, Sidgwick has followed the only method open to the investigation of moral experience. This we shall call the synthetic method, because every element which has made any of the historic theories effective may rightly find a place in the scientific study of the case. We do not mean that some interesting feature, like Machiavelli's formula, must be adopted into the scheme, in as much as it seemed to "work" in this experience or that. We shall assume that the first test of truth is its general applicability. Whatever moral values have actually been incorporated as working rules within the course of human action have so far forth proved their right to a position in the authoritative method. Current methods are partial in their criteria; pleasure and logical imperatives are understood by independent functions of mind, not by the whole mind together. The Eudæmonistic method of Aristotle is a part of psychology, not of ethics; it suggests the standard of value, but furnishes no means for its attainment. The synthetic method looks both to aims and to results, to the governing motives and the consummatory feelings. It requires the activity of the entire personality.

1. The Sense of Obligation in the Synthetic Method.

We have already agreed that the concept of obligation is rooted in the attitude of every moral agent, no matter how limited his mental resources.² The savage and the child are

¹ "Methods of Ethics," Bk. III, Ch. 13, Sec. 3.

² *Supra*, Pt. I, Ch. 6.

stimulated by its authority. The adult mind exhibits it as an irresistible tendency. We *ought* to be honest, chaste, truthful, generous. The declaration of an official commandment is not needed. Men do not ask for an esoteric analysis of the idea. They accept the terms and proceed to fulfill them. It may be that obligation terminates in the feelings of pleasure or pain, though the connection is doubtful in certain cases. What seems to be clear is that obligation is a compelling state of mind by itself; we follow its imperative without considering possible results. Hence it is the first point to be treated in the scientific study of method.

We must distinguish the sense of "ought" from the substance of wish. Will and wish are divergent attitudes, as Aristotle has demonstrated.³ We will to be honest, not because desire dictates it, but because we must obey the inner imperative. To say that a man wishes to be honest in paying his debts is not equivalent to saying that he intends to pay them. Obligation has no necessary relation to wish as a coercive power. To be sure, the stuff of obligation is drawn from desire; we know *what* we ought to do when we consult the contents of desire. But desire cannot drive; if it could, morals might be a natural science, and might even be included in physiology. History records a multitude of tragic examples where duty follows a pathway crowded with pains and social reproaches. We cannot wish for results that must destroy some of our fondest hopes. Lucius Junius Brutus moved with swift justice to the condemnation and execution of his sons for treason against the state. By no license of fancy can we say that he wished for this end. Wish and duty fall apart; but duty must be done. Wish suggests the course we "like." But we cannot assert, "I like it, therefore I ought to do it;" still less, "I ought to do it, therefore I shall like it." In the economy of human experience the *ought* stands by itself. We make free to say that if the sense of obligation is shadowy, vague, transitional, there is something wrong with

³ "Ethics," Bk. III, Ch. 4.

the subject. His training is deficient, his set of mind biased, his mental condition perhaps pathological. We insist that the normal man knows the significance of the moral urge. If he knows it but does not act upon it, we point to the sure reprobation of the clan, the law, public opinion. Human nature has adopted the principle as final and universal.

2. The Supreme Good as Basis of Moral Imperative.

The moral imperative as a fact of experience cannot stand alone; it must have substantial color, a sure foundation. We have pointed out the mistake in Kant's definition of the rational good. He argues that judgment supplies the ultimate command to moral action. There is no extraneous value by which it can be tested. If we test it by a prudential program, such as the possible pain following its application, we destroy the infallibility of the rule. If we try to inject some specific interests into the command, such as religious devotion, the command loses its intrinsic force, which depends on the sovereignty of my will. The imperative, for Kant, stands alone; duty refers to no ulterior end; it bears its justification in its own terms. If this were the sole explanation of the good, we might well pronounce the usual anathema on the system and call it formalistic.⁴ But a more sympathetic reading of the argument, especially in the second and third maxims, contributes a hint of the teleological nature of all moral action. The imperative embodies the principle of the human self as a distinctive end, supreme in its dignity, from which all objects and events, including its own behavior, must take their appropriate values. The vagueness of the first maxim has vanished; the simple logic of the formal judgment, "Thou shalt act," has changed to the logic of practical judgment, "Thou shalt act as a self." Kant is no longer on the cold altitudes of Transcendental aloofness; he has joined the ranks of thinkers who justify the use of an imperative by providing for it a solid foundation.

⁴ Cf. Rashdall, "Theory of Good and Evil," Bk. I, Ch. 5, Sec. 6.

We assume that the good is something more than a name, more than a sonorous concept which summons us to effort but can give no analysis of what the effort is to accomplish. How shall we define the good? Professor Moore holds that it cannot be defined. Good is on the same level as yellow, a simple notion whose qualifying parts, if any, cannot be apprehended by the mind. "We may try to define it [yellow] by describing its physical equivalent; we may state what kind of light vibrations must stimulate the normal eye, in order that we may perceive it."⁵ We must also study the physiological apparatus of the eye, noting how the rays of light impinge ultimately on the retinal structures, and tracing the course of the nervous excitation until it reaches the brain. To be known, yellow must be perceived. Good requires the same treatment; there are no qualifying parts to tell us what to look for. When we use the word in ordinary speech, the judgment is synthetic, as logicians say; it goes beyond any possible definition, it contains matter that could not be introduced into a definition. If I say "Pleasure is good," I cannot convert the proposition and say "Good is in every case pleasure." Nor can I do the same with knowledge or virtue. In short, good is an adjective but not a definable substantive.

We may agree with Mr. Moore that the term *good* is the most fundamental in ethical thought. Yet we need not despair of finding the equivalent. Consider this statement in the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "Good is having in adequate degree those properties which a thing of the kind ought to have." The root idea in the word is "suitable;" that which is sufficient to complete the whole. Good is not, however, the means to the end; it is the end itself, since the whole cannot be understood without it. Thus, a coin is good because it is genuine; it lacks none of the qualities essential to true worth. A good official is a man who knows the duties of his position and is conscientious in discharging them. The good man is one who organizes his daily

⁵ "Principia Ethica," Ch. 1. pp. 6-8. Cf. criticism of Moore's argument by W. D. Lamont, "The Notion of Duty," in *Mind*, Vol. 37, No. 146.

conduct so as to appear as a man of *sound* character. The autonomy of the idea of the Good may be discovered by asking whether we identify good and just, good and honest. It is true that the virtue of justice cannot be absent from the moral complex called good character; still, if a man were just but not merciful, we should hesitate to apply the term without qualification. We must certainly distinguish the ethical use of the word from its generic application. Thus, the artist, the artisan, the philosopher, are said to be good; that is to say, they have in "adequate degree those properties which a person of the kind ought to have," namely, type of intellectual competence, peculiar kind of service to be rendered by means of things or ideas. Moral goodness concerns the agent's aptitude with reference to *people*. Hence it is possible for an artist to be extraordinarily capable in his profession, yet a man of abominably vicious tendencies. Conversely, a citizen might be reckoned a good man when he is slovenly in business pursuits, though scrupulously honest; neglectful of civil duties, though loyal to the core; without interest in religious worship, though not denying the creed of the church. The word bears two different meanings in every case. It would be better if we could adopt another form for non-moral endeavors, for two reasons. First, a man can cease being an artist; he cannot cease being a moral agent. Secondly, moral values cover the entire stretch of human interests. It is not far from the truth, in most instances, to say that a philosopher who thinks consistently thinks honestly; that the artisan who plies his trade regularly is acting under moral constraints. Virtue is not the quality of being a good artist or a good general; but the values of success in every endeavor are not to be judged apart from the basic quality of moral character.

What, then, does goodness mean? If it gives wholeness to human experience, it must mean good character. This we take to be the standard of judgment. By character we do not signify the *realized self*, although the identity of the two has been assumed by many recent writers, especially

those of the Hegelian tradition.⁶ Hence, the realization of self has been the keynote of their doctrine. If a man declares that he "was not himself" when he spoke ungraciously to his neighbor, he implies that the rational self is the guiding force of which he is, at least hypothetically, aware, although he did not comply with its mandates in the given instance. In criticizing the postulate, we are obliged to argue that it has none of the clearness desired for a working standard of conduct. What does the self contain? Kant admitted two elements, the supreme purpose of all action and membership in a kingdom of ends. These two principles are accepted by all Perfectionists. But they fail to give concrete and consistent substance to self; they leave to the individual or his associates the task of supplying content to the idea. Self-realization may mean self-expression, the spontaneous play of all immediate and insistent appetites. The body is most immediate in experience; hence, its claims should first be recognized. As Sidgwick shows, this has a quasi-scientific justification, since physical desires are tested by agreeable feelings, and these feelings have been approved by the earlier behavior of the organism.⁷ If we turn to the other extreme and cultivate a self where reflection rules supreme, there is a strong likelihood that we shall end in a vague and mystical conception of self, utterly incapable of guiding us into the right paths of action.

The case is quite different when we examine the properties of character as the true guide to conduct. Character, we have said, is the systematization of desires interpreted by reason and crowned by emotional satisfactions. Historically, men have called desires as thus defined the motives to virtue, perhaps the virtues themselves. Character differs from the self in that it is a sustained growth, not an assumed whole. Character faces the man as he moves along the ways of natural behavior; self remains an idea which he struggles to convert into an empirical fact but

⁶ Cf., e.g., Bradley, Green, and Mackenzie.

⁷ "Methods of Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 6, Sec. 4.

never succeeds in realizing. If it be an idea, we have no means of equating it with the behavior of the moment. Hence, the desired test fails. Thus, if I am forced to decide whether or not to go as a man's bond, when I have nothing but his word that he will meet his obligations, I do not ask what the self is; I try my best to learn the innermost secrets of his moral habits, that is, his character, the series of motives that have been systematized by the laws of value. The principle of the Good as giving *wholeness* to moral experience fulfills the requirements of an adequate standard. It reveals its peculiar appropriateness in Kant's maxim, that man is a "member of the kingdom of ends." Character is not an individuated process carried out on an independent level of existence; it involves continuous reactions upon other beings like ourselves. Here, the good becomes the *right*, with its affinities for law and acknowledged authority. It presupposes the give-and-take of common intercourse. It would seem that Mr. Paton is explaining only one element in the concept of right when he defines it as the "content of moral acts," as contradistinguished from good, which is the guiding impulse.⁸ But right must always refer to a sequence of ideas or a course of action which has attained the distinction of moral regularity. Just and chaste actions are right because they obey the laws of sound character. When right has been adopted by public sentiment, we call it *law*.

3. Relation of Motive and Intention.

We have now answered the question, on what is a moral imperative based? The sense of obligation is necessarily connected with some standard of judgment, and we have tentatively proposed the essence of good character. We do not assume that the untutored child or savage has the principle before him consciously as a stimulating aim. By the legerdemain of experience, he may act *as if* he could state the terms in a rigid formula. No doubt the social environ-

⁸ "The Good Will," p. 325.

ment has produced such an effect on the child; perhaps the forces of nature have done the same for the savage. At all events, the imperative is not unparented; it can claim an approved pedigree. In general, men of any rank rarely refer to the ultimate end but concern themselves with the ends immediately before their eyes.

Every moral situation must be studied from two approaches—motives and intentions. Motives express the agent's disposition, the system of desires which belong inherently to his constitution. The Utilitarians have canceled all moral values here. "The morality of the act," says J. S. Mill, "depends entirely upon the intention—that is, upon what the agent *wills to do*. But the motive, that is, the feeling which makes will so to do, when it makes no difference in the act, makes none in the morality."⁹ The distinction between the mental functions seems fixed. The governing aim which forces a specific kind of behavior need not be consulted; it can make no change in moral quality unless it changes the content of the action. But even here Mill does not escape from his re-interpretation of the Utilitarian formula; the type of pleasure one seeks reveals the type of motive one must follow, and motive, as "spring of action," makes a profound difference in the end we desire to attain. Thus, to take Bentham's example, there is a yawning chasm between the attitude of the man who prosecutes his neighbor at law out of the feeling of malice and the attitude of the man who discharges his duty as the advocate of justice and order. It is absurd to say that no change in the moral complexion of the act takes place when we pass from one state of mind to the other. Malice is ordinarily classed as a wrong sentiment; it uncovers an organization of ideas which prescribe harm of body or mind to another person; as a motive, it has powerfully affected the trend of history. History, as Green intimates,¹⁰ would be shorter and duller if all analysis of the motives of its central figures were omitted. Drama and romance require

⁹ "Utilitarianism," Ch. 2, note.

¹⁰ "Prolegomena to Ethics," p. 360.

its tang to make them appeal to their readers. Thucydides and Plutarch, Homer and Shakespeare, are present-day counsellors because they describe the scope and intensity of feelings which are the direct causes of moral defeats and moral triumphs. Diabolism is a study not of external facts but of inciting desires, as Goethe says. Hence some writers, like Martineau,¹¹ compile tables of motives in the order of merit, as though one might give a higher rating for actions performed from motives standing higher in the scale of goodness. No one, except perhaps the extreme Hedonist, will deny the significant place of the compelling aim in the determination of moral values.

What part does intention bear in the making of moral conduct? The answer of Kant is, none; for behavior is the organ of desire, and desire can be appraised only in terms of feeling. But the major contests in the arena of experience are staged at the point where motive and intention meet. Duty cannot be fixed until both elements are studied. If, as often happens, the motive is not clear, duty can only be discovered by the moral values of intent. Intention embraces the consequences of an act, whether near or remote, whether direct or indirect. But if the act sets in motion forces which I could not foresee, I am relieved from responsibility therefor. Still, it is the duty of the moral intelligence to examine the nature and trend of the action which it proposes to inaugurate. Contrary to Kant's judgment, the results as well as the aims must be taken into account in determining the moral value of conduct. It is here that the complexity of moral conduct so frequently appears. The motive may be good, the intent bad, or *vice versa*; or, again, both may be good and both bad. The test occurs in the first two categories. Thus, Meredith, in a novel entitled "One of Our Conquerors," draws the noble picture of a father's interest in his child. The only child, a daughter, is the fruit of an unlegalized union, but forms with her mother the center of a happy family group. When she reaches the

¹¹ "Types of Ethical Theory," Vol. II, p. 266.

age of maturity, the problem of a suitable marriage becomes pressing. The illicit relation is unknown to her, to her suitor, heir to an earldom, to any but a few in the inner circle. Parental affection, guided by the hard common sense of the British financier, the modern conqueror, finds in this proposal of marriage a reprieve from social condemnation sure to fall when the exposure is made, as well as a guaranty of his daughter's future welfare. Another figure enters, asking the hand and devotion of the maiden, but offering none of the prestige of the earlier claimant. The case is taken out of the hands of the father; a decision is not exacted from him. Yet he had to face the new situation—a father's passion for his child as the motive and the intent in the kind of suitor she should be encouraged to accept. The test is real; motive and intent often stand in sharp antithesis; perhaps the judgment must rest on the calculation of results. We cannot, therefore, disregard the momentous values wrapped up in the contents of the proposed form of action.

4. Happiness and the Attainment of the Good.

The consequences of moral action cannot be divorced from the fact of happiness. That happiness is a universal element in conduct no serious thinker will deny. That it has been made the object of obvious and prolonged quest by many of the world's finest spirits is an equally fair conclusion. The impressive account which Mill has written of the natural and social forces that obscure its meaning or block its acquisition is well worth perusal.¹² An exact definition has never been framed, perhaps because the concept cannot be clearly analyzed, linked as it is with the pervasive currents of emotion, or because it has been so intimate a possession that men hesitate to uncover its qualities, lest they expose their own aspirations to a too censorious world. Happiness partakes of pleasure—that much is known. But pleasure as an ephemeral feeling is not the whole of

¹² "Utilitarianism," Ch. 2.

happiness, and any brand of Hedonism that attempts to capitalize a common hope in the interests of an illogical theory is doomed to disillusion. For example, no reflective observer would willingly identify a series of momentary gratifications of the sex-impulse with a true feeling of happiness. The happiness of the marriage relation consists in a sympathetic understanding of personal ideals in self-obliterating service. We may again turn to the *Oxford English Dictionary* for a statement of its meaning: "Happiness is the state of pleasurable content of mind which results from success or the attainment of what is considered good."

(a) The first principle to be noted is that happiness is inseparably united with the idea of the good. It will be recalled that in the ethics of Kant no such connection is recognized. Happiness deals with desires and their satisfactions, while virtue springs from the judgments of reason. Yet the structure of a moral world requires that good men should not be unhappy. Hence, divine power must assert its will and bring to pass what the unaided intelligence of men cannot accomplish. Kant is right in associating desire and happiness, but he is wrong in separating virtue from desire. If this defect be removed, we are prepared to admit that the happy man is one who has successfully comprehended and employed his fundamental appetitions, his purposes, as Spinoza calls them. Let us make an application. It is said by many conscientious persons that their chief happiness lies in the endeavor to bring happiness to others. Now fullness of character, the "good" of moral conduct, includes this very type of service. Hence, the familiar formula just quoted is not an overpious estimate of virtue but a genuine description of what men must do if private happiness is to be won. It may be historically true that extreme fanaticism gloats over the sufferings of the condemned, as in Poe's picture of the victim of hate, chained to the floor, awaiting destruction from the edge of the slowly approaching pendulum, while his tormentors watch his agony from

above. Still, we insensibly shrink from converting sporadic instances like this into a general rule of behavior. Our delight seems by nature's law to be inevitably bound up with social happiness. Happiness must belong to men who seek the harmony of moral character. To be sure, a certain joy, captious and wavering, creeps into the feelings of men who have outraged the laws of decent conduct—the criminal, the glutton, the sensualist. But this merely makes real a stinging corollary that, as Rashdall says, "men are not happy in proportion to their goodness."¹³ Desires are not systematized according to the order of merit; hence, they cannot obtain the best emotional effects. The conclusion is not that virtue and happiness are wholly unrelated but that happiness is not a primary end in the world of moral reflection.

(b) This brings us to the second principle noted in the definition, namely, the "pleasurable content of the mind results from the attainment of good," and therefore is not an arbitrary reward. A large group of thinkers, such as Samuel Clarke and Richard Price, insist that virtue must be followed by happiness.¹⁴ The Bible is full of passages that seem to teach this dogma, for example, "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long," etc. The Mohammedan ethics is crowded with precepts emphasizing the certainty and surpassing satisfaction of stipulated compensations. Highly moralized religions like Christianity employ the same language but change the meaning of the word "reward." Faith results in developed character, in the sense we find expressed in George Eliot's well-known saying that "the reward of one good act done is the ability to do another." The distinction between reward and result is epochal; the one means an incentive to virtuous habit; the other, the return that normally accrues through the operation of causes. The latter never stimulates to action; it merely records the degree of success

¹³ "Theory of Good and Evil," Bk. II, pp. 57-60.

¹⁴ "British Moralists," Vol. II, p. 55 and 147.

in the acquisition of virtuous character. This is the meaning of Spinoza's celebrated epigram: "Happiness is not the reward of virtue, it is virtue itself."

In the light of these considerations, there is no good reason why we may not make happiness a partial test of moral achievement, subject to the limitations already discussed. Let us not forget that in the sheer exercise of physical and mental functions a certain spontaneous joy arises, and this we cannot reject as contrary to nature's law. Rather, we seek to encourage it in children and youths. The fatal mistake of the Puritan principle lay in a deliberate neglect of the moral emotions, because, in the opinion of its proponents, they belonged to the offices of the body, not to the sentiments of the soul. They failed to see the important ethical implications at stake: Happiness is the safeguard of justice, chastity, and self-control. It does not make a man virtuous; it does not always abound in men of good character. Still, it is incumbent on any rational theory of morals to provide wide spaces for the true appraisal of happiness-values as necessary adjuncts to the conscientious pursuit of moral ideals.

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CHAPTER IX

THE SYNTHETIC METHOD

Its Application

Is a method of ethics a practical apparatus for the guidance of conduct or is it merely a set of abstract principles which satisfy an intellectual craving without exciting the slightest response in desire or emotion? It must be confessed that the average man, the man in the street, the *habitué* of the market or the forum, knows little of the scientific aspects of morals—and cares less. He may point to a few aphorisms, rules of thumb, worn and threadbare formulas, that have served him and his social kin well in moments of moral crisis; but as for framing and applying a systematic theory of values, he accepts the judgment of Locke in the “Conduct of the Understanding,” that “nobody is made anything by hearing rules or laying them up in memory; practice must settle the habits of doing without reflecting on the rule.” In fact, the hard-headed devotee of business is apt to confuse an organized moral program with a long string of moralistic platitudes, such as we find in “Poor Richard’s Almanac.” He turns away in disgust or bewilderment, wondering how a sensible mind can spend its energies in the vain endeavor to make mankind virtuous by a show of rhetoric.

But the need of rules is not so readily disposed of. Civilized society bases its intercourse on some sort of approved regulation. Language is a successful medium of communication because its symbols and concepts have obtained a settled meaning. The rules of syntax become involved in proportion to the complexity of its ideas. Logical reflection is carried on by a system of principles which must

be observed to the letter, if argument is to be effective. The institutions of trade are built on methods of counting. It is conceivable that speech might exist apart from the art of numbers, but experience proves that they inevitably go together. *Ratio* in Latin refers both to reasoning and reckoning, and definite axioms are required for each. The multiplication table is not merely the source of juvenile woes; it is the anchor of exact and profitable computation. Again, in the divine madness of æsthetic creation, men do not lose their hold on the canons of art. The sketches of Raphael, most carefully drawn, most meticulously documented, are the preliminary drafts of the noble paintings that have charmed the eyes of critics for centuries. Genius develops rules, rules which are guides to expression. Nor are the strictly social practices of man without their directive precepts. Government is the science of social control; it takes its name from the helmsman in the boat who steers his course by the well-defined rules of navigation. Government acts by laws, and laws instruct the citizens how to conduct their daily lives.

Now, if regulation extends to language, trade, art, and politics, it would be foolhardy indeed for a man to attempt to promote his private interests or discharge his public obligations with no regard to the principles of moral judgment. We shall therefore discuss the Five Rules of Practice in the application of the synthetic method.

Rule 1. Ascertain the Contents of the Act and Its Normal Consequences.

The duty herewith imposed is enormous. Professor Laird has discriminated four sources of ignorance of which we may well take heed: ignorance of our native capabilities, of the mode of acting in detail, of the remote effects, together with the difference in the "degree of ignorance reasonably to be expected in different agents."¹ The second and third items interest us here. It has been signifi-

¹ "A Study of Moral Theory," p. 65.

cantly said that the explanation of the terms of a problem in mathematics is frequently its formal solution. If we can compile the precise social and personal changes that are bound to enter into the structure of the act, we shall be in a position to state and estimate their underlying moral values. The program, however, is of a most intricate sort, demanding intimate knowledge of the common reactions of mind as well as those attitudes that are set up in emergent cases, as for example, when men are surprised by the event. It requires also an acquaintance with the movements of men in mass, a most difficult kind of information to obtain, especially when we are not certain of the mental and moral qualities of the leadership involved. Likewise, the form and diversity of the physical environment must be taken into account—the economic forces at work, the ease with which men adapt themselves to the type of land they inhabit, their skill in extracting from nature her toll of goods for the support of life and the culture of mind. It is therefore not at all certain that we can frame the intent of the act in accord with the dominating desire. And even if we could construct the details to our liking, we should still be desperately hampered by the quixotic changes that overtake an action once begun and carry it perhaps beyond our directing hand.

This introduces a new phase of the moral problem, very awkward to anticipate, confounding our fondest hopes in realization. How far does my sponsorship of the consequences of the action extend? Are facts unforeseen, and perhaps undesired, to be held against me? Am I to go into debt to brute circumstance and impair my moral credit by accepting responsibilities where, I honestly feel, none exists? When the deed is finished, it will be of no service to protest that I should have done it otherwise if the results could have been forestalled. The world we live in is a world of laws; yet the keenest judgment, at times, is at a loss to determine how the laws will operate, especially when they affect human consciousness. A moral "jam" is the rule of the road, and no one can escape.

Consider the famous case of John Hampden. The British exchequer was exhausted, and that in face of a threat of war from France and Holland. Revenues were needed at once. Attorneys of the crown uncovered an ancient statute which permitted the king to lay imposts on the maritime counties for defense against a foreign foe. But the moneys thus derived were insufficient, and, instigated by the vigorous representations of Laud and Wentworth, the levy was extended to the entire country. The argument for the king's authority grew with the need; if a navy could be equipped for defense, an army also could be raised for the maintenance of internal peace; if the nation could defend its coasts against invasion, it could send its armed force to prevent invasion. The issue was joined: Should England cast to the winds its hard-won liberties and allow an autocratic and brazen ruler to act in defiance of all precedent? Then arose John Hampden, and, with words that drove to the heart of Britain's loyalty, he refused to pay the unlawful tax, pledging his honor and his substance in support of the great rejection.

What were the judgmental elements in the act? Plainly, the superficial feature was the refusal to pay. Other forms of behavior were open to him. He might appeal directly to the courts for relief; he might insist on the convening of Parliament for a thorough discussion of the new imposts; he might quietly canvass the opinion of his influential friends, and, on arriving at a provisional program, embody it in a memorial to the officers of the crown. He adopted the straightforward method, knowing that, like other moral experiments, its ramifications would be wide—and dangerous. Refusal meant rejection of the king's authority in the realm. He must therefore have sound reasons for his act. He could not be charged with miserliness, for the tax amounted to but twenty pounds for the entire estate. The principle at stake went down to the roots of British citizenship. We, at the present moment, may surmise what would happen to the Russian who boldly cut athwart the edicts of the Soviet government and refused to pay his

assessment or serve in the army. The situation in 17th century England was no more favorable to individual freedom. For, with the refusal made and declared, Hampden must look to the ultimate effects—which were trial before the highest court in the land, condemnation by a majority of one, close but fatal, later a peremptory demand for his surrender and imprisonment, then, in the thick of civil strife, wounds and suffering and death, and with it all the English people borne slowly but surely to the most critical convulsion in the long struggle for the attainment of civil rights.²

Rule 2. Determine the Appropriate Principle of Moral Action.

If inspection of the possible consequences of an act throws us into a state of doubt, no less are we troubled by the kind of moral values which should be selected as the basis of action. We must distinguish the several classes of value. (i) Are we interested in stressing the “lower” qualities of human nature, those directly related to the body, or shall we bend our energies to the pursuit of values that promote the inward culture of the soul? (ii) Shall we consider the acquisition of private “goods” solely, or make benevolence the principal object of desire? It may be said that all values are concurrent in every act and it therefore makes little difference which we emphasize at the moment. But this opinion seems to rob us of the need of individual judgment, and the moral worth of the act suffers in proportion. Yet, granting that we are at liberty to choose the contents of the act, can we be sure of the motivating principle that will guide us to the final decision? Hampden had no scruples in the year 1635; it was sun-clear to him that fidelity to the fundamental principles of the British nation enjoined but one possible course. His motive became the more explicit in the light of his knowledge of England’s

² The reader is referred to Macaulay’s “Essays” for an interesting account of life and work of John Hampden.

history. Had he foreseen the ultimate results—the overthrow of the monarchy, the execution of the king, the social chaos for a generation—it is doubtful whether he would have altered his course; certainly, he would never have relinquished his governing purpose. A change of course may mean either the surrender of principle or the suspension of its application at the moment and the substitution of a different motive. “Practical sagacity,” as Laird calls it, is sometimes the true attitude of the highly moralized mind. But sagacity when it is practical tends to become ineffectual, yielding to seductive whims, playing up favorite motives, giving undue value to this or that kind of action. The principles we propose to follow must be made clear and coherent. If, for instance, we expect to obey the social impulse, we should take care not to be mere “reformers” in the sentimental sense, but earnest students of the conditions of society, discovering, if we can, why it fails to meet the demands of justice with respect, let us say, to proper care of children—food, housing, education, opportunity to work when of age. Now, since the only way we can know motive is to see it at work in the intended act, we are chagrined to find its influence shortened and impaired by the consequences of the act. It seems to us that a good moral motive should and must make the act definitively good; and we cannot understand how there is any miscarriage in the effects. The solution of the apparent contradiction is suggested by Butler: In matters of practice the evidence can yield only probable truth, a “greater presumption on one side than on the other,” but this presumption creates in us an “absolute and formal obligation” to act in conformity with its terms. “Probability is the very guide of life.”³ To be sure, probable truth is always contrasted with divine truth, and we can therefore obtain authoritative knowledge in no field of human inquiry. But Butler urges us to use every facility for determining truth and to apply the results to the “best of our ability.”

³ “Analogy of Religion,” Introduction.

Two subordinate rules will aid us in this undertaking. The first is a note of caution: we should not take a posture of indecision merely because the basic principles are not discernible to the average intelligence. Such a posture is defeatist in tone; it allows the most sacred interests of the soul to go uncultivated. This tendency is one of the conspicuous legacies of any moral crisis, as, for instance, the war of 1914-18. Great idealistic concepts hovered before the eyes of millions of crusaders. Men fought for the right of free determination of destiny, for the supremacy of controlling moral principles—justice, honesty, equality, for the power of mind over brute force, for the settlement of differences between nations by reason, not by the sword. The reactions, when the struggle ceased, were benumbing. Greed and particularism, sordid economics and misguided politics, corruption in high places—money, not morals, the goal of endeavor, success defined in terms of material rewards, not of the refinements of soul—these for years have sunk their fangs into the flesh and heart of stupored peoples. Men say, "Let moral principles pass; we shall go with the crowd." They have pursued the policy of drift. But drift is the very antithesis of Butler's counsel. There is no presumption of truth in the policy; truth requires search, and drift is the nullification of search. Drift is the policy of the slave who "takes his purposes from another."

The second maxim is that motives can be established only by drill. It has been sententiously stated by Spinoza: "Conceive a system of right conduct or fixed practical precepts, commit it to memory, and apply it forthwith to particular circumstances."⁴ The platform of experience is the stage of action, and that experience need not be the high levels of moral crisis, "times that try men's souls." The real test is wrought out in the performance of the average duties of an average life. Modern literature has witnessed a cardinal change in the materials of character study. Drama deals with crucial situations, the conflict of elemental passions,

⁴ "Ethics," Bk. V, Prop. 10, Scholium.

usually in the public eye. Romance recites the commonplace incidents in commonplace careers—sincere affection or private hate, uninspiring ambitions, trivial changes of scene, humdrum tasks of small significance. Yet when these are colored by the skill and artistry of the author, as in the “Scenes from Clerical Life,” we wonder whether heroism in unnoticed places is not more splendid than in the crash of battle, whether sacrifice for the interests of a beloved child is not a holier motive than the greatest abnegation of statesman or soldier. The argument of Spinoza is that the quiet discharge of homely duties fits the hero for his lofty tasks. In this way, men are trained to choose values with a knowledge of their original and unconventionalized meaning. No fictitious appraisal, no extraneous luster, can dilute the strength of that appeal. The youth who is reared in the blaze of public contemplation, in the king’s court or the household which fame or wealth has touched, cannot understand the deeper purposes of moral action. He does not learn the value of moral rules, because he can never get the stern, unremitting drill required by their terms. Drill considers neither social status nor intellectual achievements nor artistic genius; it is the instrument by which sound and enduring character is produced. The function of education is defined by this process.

Rule 3. Test the Proposed Act by Reference to Authority.

By authority we mean here the logic of events. Some responsible agents have sought to justify their conduct by the decision of distinguished thinkers—statesmen, jurists, moral teachers, religious workers—Socrates, Solon, Solomon, Moses, Buddha, Christ. Jurisprudence has adopted the principle as its ultimate guide, building its new statute on the solid foundations of the past.

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent.⁵

⁵ Tennyson, “You Ask Me Why.”

Blackstone and Coke, Marshall and Cooley, are names that men delight to honor, incorporating their formulas into the modern types of legislation. Hampden obeyed the Anglo-Saxon impulse and argued for the illegality of the tax, because the king and his ministers had overstepped the bounds of their vested authority. But the sentiment of his challenge went back to the signing of Magna Carta, which the firm will and solid character of his barons wrung from the hands of King John. Magna Carta is a symbol as well as a fact; it stands for every moral decision which individuals and states must make sometime in their unfolding history. Here we do not follow an approved mandate, though its principles inspire in us reverence and hope. Here we match event by event, motive by motive; we compare the consequences of earlier devotion to freedom and ardently expect by virtue of kindred valor and endurance that Hampden's deed, which sprang from the same sense of loyalty to a disinterested principle, will in due time bring to modern peoples the boon of moral rectitude and social progress. The rule is equally effective for deeds of public worth and of quiet faith. The logic of moral causality is without exception; "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." We may therefore boldly test the validity of the present judgment by reference to a deed in history or private life that bears the marks of similar moral conditions.

Rule 4. Criticize the Motive That Stimulates the Act.

In the second rule, we required a knowledge of the motive which prompts the mind to action. The present rule examines the reasons why this motive is chosen. The inspection is a strictly personal one, or, in the case of social activity, a study of controlling sentiments. This does not imply that we are returning to the Idealistic program, which makes motive the sole judge of conduct. It does not mean that we are trying to force the governing aim to reflect, bit by bit, the moral values of the declared intent. Motive and intent, we have argued, belong reciprocally to the morality of conduct; they cannot be considered sepa-

rately. The present rule affirms that the act is specifically and irrevocably my own; it signifies that I have no wish to shoulder it off on another, when, as might easily happen, its consequences are bitter and repugnant. Many men are virtuous in motive, noble in anticipatory feelings, so long as the fruit of action makes no change in their social status, no alteration in the attitude of their associates, no diminution in their enjoyment of creature comforts. They are fair-weather saints, basking in the sunlight of objective approbation. Whenever they apprehend that undesirable and inconvenient changes are about to ensue, it is not uncommon to find them covertly revising their opinions or offering an explanation that completely obscures the meaning of the first motive.

John Hampden had no part or lot with them. His purpose was the same when he faced his accusers in London as when he uttered his refusal in his own county. He did not trim, he did not waver. The solemn oath of the Englishman was his and he adhered to it to the end. It expressed the sense of duty which he owed to his country, his race, and the world. No citizen should be taxed except upon the basis of the law which he himself has helped to frame. He could not surrender the right or the principle, and a criticism of his state of mind left no doubt as to the honesty of his judgment and the sincerity of his aim.

To the exceptional mind, criticism is confirmation. But the average man has no such consistency of conduct as might release him from the prescriptions of the rule. It is imperative that he make a severe and critical examination of his inward sentiments at the moment when the deed is planned. He should inquire, for instance, whether his motive might not be a sympathetic emulation of the prevailing mode of thought. Imitation, we admit, is a natural and instinctive tendency; but it quickly assumes the color of self-origination. Every social circle contains men who register the exact barometric pressure of their neighbors' opinions. We may smile at the behavior and pass on. But the truth of the matter is that imitation is too fre-

quently allied with fear, a servility that destroys the subject's power to will at the very moment when he regards that power as sovereign. His deed may have the luster of objective goodness; but its moral value is weakened by the dominating motive, which the man himself does not clearly understand. Kant records a good example. The merchant is tempted to overcharge the child who is just making a purchase in the shop. He is restrained by a regard for his reputation and its effect upon his trade. It is an arbitrary treatment of the case to withhold all moral quality from the act. The deciding motives may be mixed, the dominating one may be of lower value in the hierarchy of moral sentiments. But at least we must seek, beneath the imperious sanctions of repute, a desire to respect fully some of the elements of moral judgment. Since, however, a libration as between possible motives does take place, we cannot make the final and authoritative evaluation of the act's morality until we have searchingly examined every active motive from every angle of approach. Nothing less will satisfy the demands of a reflective ethics.

Rule 5. Attempt to Universalize the Contents of the Act.

It is futile to regard an act as fully moral if we cannot expect other persons besides ourselves to adopt it as an imperative. The word *moral* means, literally, pertaining to custom or habit; the former term implies social consent; the latter, a constitutional form of behavior. Behavior differs from conduct, since conduct provides for individual choice. It therefore happens that a primordial desire like acquisitiveness is virtuous in one man's career and vicious in another's. The problem then is, how can we set up regularity of moral conduct corresponding to that which takes place automatically in animal behavior? The answer of some observers is, we cannot. Choice hangs upon the disposition of the individual, and, since dispositions differ in every organism, a uniform type of conduct is impossible. Thus, if one man be by nature frank and open in his sentiments, his moral acts will differ widely from those of a

naturally suspicious or skeptical temper. There would seem to be no common ground of judgment.

This answer, however, does not satisfy the reflective mind. We may admit that men vary in their use of moral ideas, for justice has not the same meaning for any two observers, even on the same level of intelligence. We may also admit that, even with the same training and experience, men view a given moral program with conflicting motives. If the definition of terms and the approach to a specific situation be both met with contradictions, how can I hope that my present decision will be acknowledged as morally valid by my neighbor? Or we may put the question thus: What moral values exist in this decision which we can be sure must and will exist in our neighbor's judgment made under similar conditions? The solution of Kant has been found wanting. The will has no power of its own election to proclaim its act as binding upon all. Some forms of action seem to be universal in their own content—truth-telling, honesty, justice, benevolence—but the vast majority of concepts encounter certain qualifications that at least give us pause in the attempt to assign objective character to them. Butler's theory of probability may well be kept in mind.

Hence, it seems unwise to begin with a series of deductive principles which everyone must recognize and obey. We should rather study the manner in which moral precepts have grown up. It is not beyond the bounds of historical accuracy to say that Hampden tested carefully the precept of civil liberty by the inductive process. At the same time, in the spirit of the Puritan theology, he may have accepted it as a direct communication to responsible minds for the guidance of conduct. But equality before the law is not a primitive axiom, for civil institutions were late in appearing. The common maxims of society were first written in action and then converted into statutory laws. The obedience of children to parents, the care of the young by the parents, the subjection of servant to master, especially of members of the clan to the chief, the mutual interests of

members of the tribe generating a sort of friendly sympathy—these were the formal principles in vogue when man was fresh in moral endeavors. In short, as Ladd truly says, the primary axioms of conduct are strictly institutional.⁶ Authority backed by force was then, and is now, the surest means of creating moral sentiment. Slowly the instruments of law take the place of the instruments of force. Freedom in civil pursuits and freedom in intellectual judgments is the fruit of weary labor and the most demanding sacrifices; it is not an original quality of mind. Hence, it is not difficult to reach the conclusion that all so-called objective virtues have no pristine color; they get their value solely through the channels of experience. We shall examine this doctrine in the next section of this book.

But there are other virtues that cannot be explained upon an institutional basis. They have one meaning in the early community and quite another in periods of reflective thinking. Generally speaking, the new problems are contests between antithetical groups, between groups, at any rate, that are defined as noncommensurable. The most persistent problem is the relation of the sexes. So long as brute force or organized law prescribed a certain position to woman, the precept of chastity was supreme. It was her virtue, her honor, her one moral quality. The rule persists today in many quarters. But with the coming of the electoral franchise and the admission of women to substantially all vocations, business and professional, the attitude of both sexes to the problem is profoundly changed. Its terms are wholly new, extremely intricate, full of thorns. In making an adjustment by means of accepted moral principles, no critic may appeal to ancient sanctions, religious, customary, or physical. The problem must be discussed upon its inherent merits. Writers like Ibsen and G. B. Shaw have done much to disentangle sentimental prepossessions from the facts of scientific interest. But the new problem is not yet precisely formulated; it requires sympathetic analysis, patient study of details, wide reading of history. Of one

⁶ "Philosophy of Conduct," p. 397.

thing we may be sure, that we have in its terms one of the major moral issues of the new age. How its precepts will be universalized as a definite program of social progress is a question to tax the skill and patience of the best synthetic minds.

We may sum up the argument of the chapter in the following words: It is possible and desirable to establish a technique for realizing the primary axioms of ethics. The technique consists of a series of rules which embody the practical attitude of the thinker to his task. He must insist on determining the precise value of the several elements in the proposed action, together with the normal consequences which may be expected to flow from it. He must then isolate the suitable principle which shall set forth in unmistakable terms the motives which govern him in the choice of such behavior. He must be sure to test the validity of the motives by reference to approved authority, whether in history or in his own experience, and he must carefully scrutinize his reasons for selecting the given motives in the given case. Finally, he must in imagination or by deliberate inquiry seek to apply the substance of the action to the general behavior of mankind, not in the hypothetical manner recommended by Kant, which carries with it the fallacy of the legislative will, but by comparison of his own needs with the average needs of the moral agent. In this way, the synthetic method will be found to contain practical suggestions for the solution of the intricate problems confronting the moral consciousness.

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PART III
THE PROBLEMS OF ETHICS

CHAPTER I

MORAL KNOWLEDGE

The study of ethical methods which we have just completed sought to discover a criterion by which all conduct could be judged. It appears that the rational good cannot be lodged in the nature of the governing will or in the amount of pleasure derived, but solely in the type of character which the agent aims to develop. Now conduct is a series of reflective acts, and every act consists both of a stimulating motive and a group of recognized consequences. Hence it is not conduct in the large, but the individual form of behavior whose moral quality we are obliged to examine. This introduces us to the practical problems of ethics, a distinct field of inquiry, where psychological principles slowly change into the habitudes of moral law.

The practice of morality differs radically from the pursuit of logic or religion. Logic acquaints us with prescribed modes of thinking, definite axioms that cannot be disregarded except to our intellectual hurt. The scientist may argue that the law of contradiction is an abstract postulate set up to cover certain sequences of ideas like the theorems of geometry; it may be abandoned in the practical tests of the laboratory. Yet if he attempts to identify the reactions of oxygen and hydrogen in the presence of a third substance, say, nitrogen, he will find himself in an extremely awkward situation. There is no problem in formal logic; there is law and its observance. Nor has religion in its strict meaning any problematical material. A problem implies doubt, an uncertainty whether principles can be applied. Here doubt cannot arise; either we assent to faith in a comprehensive Deity or we reject it. Religion is inward communion; it is not the resolution of vexed situations.

When, however, we meet a particular point in morals—should we or should we not retaliate for a slanderous aspersion on character?—we enter a wholly new territory of human judgment. The case might be decided on the basis of pure deductive reasoning; or we might refer to the career of some historic figure who was obliged to meet the same condition. But duty is never fully determined by either method. The problem is our own, a distinct and complicated situation; its terms are simple in form but perplexing in application. Is it *right* to retaliate? Does virtue lie in gratifying the instinct of resentment? Can I say offhand and without reservation that insult must always be followed by retributory measures? *How can I be sure that such a judgment is correct?* We now come in sight of the problem of moral knowledge, the first question that presses for an answer. Since it is a problem, we may expect a variety of solutions to be offered. The history of ethics records several independent explanations of the genesis of moral truth. We have already examined one at length; Hedonism not only fixes the aim of conduct but tells us how we recognize it in experience. We know an act to be morally good when it yields a surplus of pleasurable feeling. We now intend to study an alternative scheme, Intuitionism, and, after exposing its inadequacies, proceed to state and defend the only practical solution of the problem.

1. Intuition as the Organ of Moral Knowledge.

(a) Intuitionism is the conscious attempt to find the sources of moral truth. It intimates that the mind is capable of judging the moral complexion of an act without inspecting its consequences. There are just two forms that moral conduct may take, right and wrong, and one of these must characterize every action. These ideas are simple and can therefore be immediately apprehended; they are also original in nature; they are not concoctions of the individual mind through the medium of experience. Because they are simple and fixed in meaning, it is quite as impossible to

analyze their contents as to demonstrate the truth of a geometrical axiom. We must admit that the whole is greater than the part, that equals added to equals are equal. We must likewise admit that justice is a fact of nature, and hence immutable.

But how shall immutable truth be discerned? At this point the theory breaks up into independent definitions. For the first group—Price, Cudworth, Moore, and perhaps Butler—intuition means the perceptual determination of right and wrong; for the second group—Shaftesbury and Hutcheson—a particular organ, the moral sense, is required. The principle which unites the two orders of intuition is that neither experience nor syllogistic proof can fix the meaning of good and evil. Moral quality is discerned swiftly and surely by the unaided mind. Thus, we have direct acquaintance with a particular yellow object by the organ of sight; we can taste the sweetness of the fruit because sweetness is in the object. One theory emphasizes the contents of perception; the other, its emotional reactions. Richard Price inquires whether “goodness, gratitude, and veracity appear to any mind under the same character with cruelty, ingratitude, and treachery.”¹ There is as sharp and irreconcilable a difference between them as between light and darkness; men cannot fail to apply the right term to the right condition. Cudworth distinguishes between natural justice and civil justice and holds that the former is the immediate edict of reason and must be obeyed.² There is thus a native faculty by whose deliverances we are enabled to detect the good and the evil in a given situation. On the other hand, Shaftesbury considers that the root of all moral quality is in the affections. A course of action is virtuous if it appeals strongly to the sentiments of self-interest or benevolence; it is vicious if its terms are repugnant to our feelings. The method, however, is not that of Hedonism; we do not judge the quantity of pleasure or pain, sum it up, and act if the surplus be good. Intuition

¹ Selby-Bigge, “British Moralists,” Vol. II, p. 126.

² *Ibid.*, II, 149.

tells us strictly in advance whether the idea agrees or disagrees with its inherent affections. The preliminary contemplation is sufficient.³ Hutcheson is more explicit. He boldly says that "the affections which are of the most importance in morals are love and hatred," and that all forms of moral action spring directly from these. The criterion of a virtuous act is "whether our affections embrace or reject it."⁴ We have the same immediate and unerring cognition of virtue and vice as of the taste of an orange or the smell of a flower. The only qualification made is that men must possess the normal sensory equipment.

At this point, the differences between the two types of Intuition slowly emerge. In pure perception, the report of the understanding is exact; there can be no mistake—this act is right, that act is wrong. Honesty is not the best policy; it is the rescript of nature. In a circle, every point on the circumference is equidistant from a point within called the center. If one point be found which does not satisfy the conditions, the circularity of the figure is destroyed. In geometrical figures, no such deviations can occur; nor can they occur in the domain of moral intuition. But the Moral Sense theory descends from the lofty heights of certitude. It acknowledges that affections fail to gain their ends. Frequent and powerful incursions of prejudice thwart the operation of the moral sense, precisely as disease or nervous shock throws the physiological senses into disorder. On the whole, however, "it is highly probable that the senses of all men are pretty uniform," and it is more probable that they will judge truly rather than falsely—a bit of optimism not always borne out by the facts. We have here some of the practical common sense of Butler. Moral judgments are bound to be limited by conditions; if we could find a normal, healthy, perfectly functioning mind, we might expect an exact distinction of good from evil. But moral behavior is teleological; it seeks an end; yet "what end can be proposed without presupposing instincts, desires, affections,

³ *Ibid.*, I, 33, *et seq.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 85.

or a moral sense?" Virtue and vice are not independent, self-acting modes of conduct; they are functions of a psychic constitution; hence, moral intuitions may not in every case reach their goal in action.

(b) So much for early types of Intuitionism; the same contrasts appear in the thinking of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most conspicuous representative of perceptual Intuitionism is James Martineau, a contemporary of Sidgwick and Spencer. We are, he thinks, "sensible of a graduated scale of excellence among our natural principles"—a fact which we have agreed to recognize as of the first importance in realistic ethics. Springs of action, moral motives, are classified as higher and lower, but these terms bear no relation to the degree of pleasure or æsthetic gratification; they can refer only to a scale of dutifulness, rightness—morality as an objective quality of behavior. The acceptance of such a moral scale is what we call "conscience," and the more delicate the knowing faculty is, the finer will be the shades of moral character as apprehended by conscience. Conscience is thus the "critical perception of the relative authority of our several principles of action." We must carefully distinguish between the perceptive and reflective functions of mind; the former discerns the truth of virtue and vice, the latter discusses merely the results of action. If it be asked why moral experiences are so diverse, Martineau answers that the perceptions of honesty and justice do not vary, but men interpret perceptions in the light of their private equipment of desires and habits. If we be pressed for a reason why ethical judgments differ widely even among men on the same intellectual level, we may reply that "only a part of the moral rule is present to particular persons, and to different persons not the same part." In short, the same diversity of thought and action is found in moral decisions as in other departments of mental behavior.⁵

Contrasted with the thoroughgoing Intuitionism of

⁵ "Types of Ethical Theories," 2nd ed., Vol. II, pp. 46-68.

Martineau stands the equally distinctive theory of Franz Brentano, a Continental contemporary of the British group. He returns to the argument of Hutcheson and argues (i) that there is a "certain inward rightness which constitutes the essential superiority of a particular act of will over against another of an opposite character," and (ii) that "we call something good when the law relating to it is right." The first of these axioms could be accepted by Martineau and Price; the second reveals the Moral Sense theory in a new dress. The criterion of virtue is the exercise of the "right kind of love." Brentano admits that natural love, the sheer affectional reaction to a specific type of action, cannot be the final test of value. "One man loves what another hates." The miser with his irrational sacrifices for the sake of pecuniary gains cannot be the same kind of a critic of goodness as the philanthropist who spends time and substance for the benefit of his fellows. The rule must be that love will rest upon the "right end of life towards which every act is ordered." In that case, we retort, the criterion of goodness lies not in the kind or intensity of love but in the type of object which elicits it. Brentano admits that "perfect knowledge without noble love and perfect noble love without knowledge" are unsuitable goals for moral conduct. Hence, the newest phase of the Moral Sense theory fails to yield a practical method for the discernment of right and wrong.⁶

2. Criticism of Intuitionism.

The objections to the theory are grave and decisive. The principles upon which it is founded are beset by embarrassing difficulties. There is first (i) the claim that the mind can make an instantaneous and true perception of the moral value of the act without reference to its place in the group of judgments which the normal mind has assembled. Thus, we may seek information on the following point: Shall an insulted man retaliate at once and decisively upon his

⁶ "Origin of Knowledge of Good and Evil," pp. 16, 28, 29.

attacker? When Catiline impugns the motive and character of the Roman senator, what is the right and proper attitude for Cicero to adopt? He determines to retaliate by urging the Senate to brand Catiline as a conspirator against the state, worthy of banishment, if not of death. Is this decision a trustworthy perception of the rectitude of retaliatory measures under prescribed conditions? May we say that any man who finds himself under the lash of a refractory tongue must immediately perceive the moral quality of his response? The matter is not susceptible of so easy an adjustment. Experience seems to show that, instead of direct intuition, the basis of action is the repeated and mature judgment of ourselves or others, perhaps through many years of reflective thought—with mistakes and interpreted victories behind us, with revisions of judgment and more modest aims now at hand.

In the second (ii) place, approval or disapproval requires a stronger foundation than the sudden intuition of the moment or the appeal to private emotions. The authority of a logical decision lies in its extra-personal application; it puts aside local color and individual flavor and seeks an objective character. Social morality takes its complexion and currency only too frequently from the likes and dislikes of the dominant personalities of the group. If retaliation depends on the kind of sentiments which men, by nature, bear towards those who antagonize their interests, then the drive of society towards war, international or internecine, is the final definition of the term. Dynastic pretensions, economic needs, religious egotisms, are the common instigations to conflict. But each of these is a subjective claim, not a universal mandate, and scientific altruism cannot approve a moral dictum that has not been subjected to criticism by logic or experience. Intuitionism may retort that the virtue in question is not positive in its implications. Whenever we deal with straightforward qualities like love for family, loyalty to the state, adherence to the intrinsic sense of justice, then the perception is clear and distinct, like one of Descartes' ideas. But, we answer,

resentment is a positive fact in human nature, as a moralist like Butler or a psychologist like James both admit. Men defend their honor, safeguard their private character, reject the malignant jibe of friend or foe. These are solid obligations; they are girt by sanctions that spring neither from casual wish nor perceptual whim but from the coercive force of judgment.

But the Intuitionist theory must meet its critics in the field of practice also. Two points have been strongly contested. (i) The definitions of moral concepts are confused and contradictory. Assuming that moral truth can be directly perceived, how shall we account for the multiplied shades of meaning attaching to almost every major principle in morals? If Martineau's solution were valid, we might despair of ever reaching complete knowledge of any truth. But perhaps the doctrine of truth needs revision. Intuitionism supposes moral concepts to exist as "eternal and immutable" truths. This implies that a true idea must exist whether or not the object embodying it does or ever will exist. The crude realism of the Middle Ages still keeps a strangle hold over certain types of mind. The fact is that truth grows with experience; and this is proven by the attitude of the social mind towards moral formulas. Men's conceptions of honor, honesty, veracity, generosity, are fluid, not fixed. Thus, retaliation is defined today in terms both of Christian ethics and of the creed of Nietzsche. Nietzsche affirms with brutal frankness that the superman, conscious of his individual superiority, regards his fellows as chattel slaves, mere sheep and oxen who exist for the purpose of promoting his personal interests. Here retaliation can take but one form, condign and inescapable punishment, not only pains of body but the exacerbating stings of soul. Standing squarely against this is the Christian precept that we shall turn the unsmitten cheek to the offender's rod. Both meanings are accepted in "good society." Politics, economics, education, religion, social intercourse, entertain conflicting judgments, moral principles that can be united by no logical alchemy. Which is

right? The same word is used, but contradictory definitions adopted. If the intuitive faculty is able to render an immutable decision, why is it tantalizingly withheld? If men can get part of the truth, as Martineau says, why can they not extract the whole? To these crucial queries Intuitionism has no convincing reply.

But granted that men could piece together the severed bits of truth into a consistent whole, there is still the second (ii) criticism to refute. Why is moral practice so utterly at odds with itself? Not only as between ages of history or races of men or individuals within a community, but also in my own integrated career, there is no uniform treatment of the same moral idea. Definitions cannot compel obedience, nor can direct intuitions. Said Kant, "I ought, therefore I can;" he was shrewd enough to stop there. If he had said, "I can, therefore I will," a host of empirical incongruities would have stared him in the face. Men do not act in the same manner under the spur of the same moral principles. Whence comes the difference in practice? From "constitutional differences," Martineau replies. There is something to be said for this opinion; for the Puritan temper of Cromwell would certainly interpret retaliation diversely from the lofty idealism of Milton. Yet if that were all, then personal responsibility would be submerged in the necessary restraints of nature and morals would be lost. We can only explain the conflicting uses of the same truth by the commonplace observation that the meaning and authority of virtue are differently understood. So ordinary a concept as honesty is susceptible of numerous interpretations. It stands written on every code of ethics and in every civil law, "Thou shalt not steal." Is there no ambiguity in the command? Dishonesty means the unwarranted sequestration of another's goods. But every word in the formula demands examination. What are the goods we may not steal? May we steal another man's ideas and still be honest? May we steal his character by sidelong hints and secret innuendoes and remain blameless? What is sequestration? Do we steal a man's property if we borrow it for a

time and fail to return it in the same condition? How is action "unwarranted"? Is the warrant issued by the state, by the local neighborhood, by religion, by the inner urge? Time and circumstance make old ideas "uncouth;" they destroy the sanctions we once approved. Do *morals* change with the change of customs? How can they change if unerring intuition at the start gave the true meaning to their central ideas? We close the case against the method with the verdict, *non demonstrata est*.

3. Judgments of Value Determine Moral Truth.

It is plain from our critique of Intuitionism that no mind can render a moral decision by the simple inspection of the act or by referring it to one of our controlling sentiments. An examination of the Kantian program shows that the will of man operating in its own right is unable to prescribe an infallible mode of behavior. Both methods have disregarded the fundamental element of consciousness, namely, desire, without which action obtains no values whatsoever. But we have already argued that desires cannot stand by themselves; they must be compared and selected, and this requires judgment. Every moral situation, we said, is a distinct problem, and a problem involves the competition of desires. No solution can possess the categorical precision which Intuitionism guarantees. This thought may bring a shock to tender consciences which look for immutable decisions, such as are recorded in the stern denunciations of the wicked. They forget the qualifying assurances that are always attached—"If a wicked man shall forsake his way." What can this import but that moral error is really tentative, not constitutive; and that judgments made about it should be contingent, not categorical?

(a) It appears, therefore, that we shall know what action is good and ought to be done through a study of the *ends* that are to be served. What desire should be emphasized at this point in order to preserve the balance of moral character? We know in general what *good* is; we seek now

to decide whether the proposed action comes within its scope. It must be observed that any decision cuts two ways; it states not only that the act is good but also that its neglect would be bad. There is no neutral zone in morals; the Intuitionists are here on solid ground. Decision means that we have chosen a specific end to be realized, believing it to be in accord with the kind of character we have espoused. If decision is arrived at, the execution must follow in due time. To postpone it is to tamper with the prescriptions of moral obligation; to refuse to obey it is to accept the alternative course with all the sorrows of conscience it entails.

Let us describe the situation by means of a classic example. The principle of atonement is one of the most powerful in the history of moral evolution. Sophocles has represented its irresistible urge in his dramatic recital of King Œdipus' remorse. The Hellenic chief had won his throne by sheer force of personal capacity. Yet, in the long list of achievements, two stand out as of sinister portent—he had slain his own father, who resisted his advance, and he had married his own mother, the widow of the deceased king. In each case, the blood-relationship was unknown to him, but when the facts were revealed and his mother (and wife) had taken her own life, remorse at having even unwittingly violated one of the most sacred covenants of the law drove him to the bitterest kind of requital. He resolved to extinguish his sight, an act which to Greek fancy was more terrible than suicide itself—a living death, a life of solitude, social reprehension, and despair. The atonement was just and his primitive conscience approved it. The highest good he could picture to himself was the satisfaction of the gnawing remorse. Homer represents it as the coercion of the Furies,⁷ the shade of his mother clamoring for adequate reprisal. Modern sufferers know only too well how insistent is the drive of the retributory sentiment; it will not be silenced. Which, then, was the better course,

⁷ "Odyssey," XI, 271-280.

which could give calm of spirit and harmony of moral experience—a sullen defiance of the rules of the tribe or a manly acknowledgment of guilt, gross enough in itself, though not so gross as if he had acted in full possession of the facts? Somehow the social wrath must be appeased, since the solidarity of the clan required the exclusion of marriage to those near of kin. He therefore took his courage in his hands and destroyed the sight of his eyes.

How did Œdipus decide upon the rightness of the act? We may allege that he followed the custom of the age, that is, he obeyed a sort of naïve intuition. Or we may hold that his emotional training, concentrated in the feelings of remorse, disclosed the repugnance of the act and the need of adequate propitiation. We might even hint that he chose between the pains of physical suffering on the one side and the sure consequences of defying the public will on the other. But the poet, speaking no doubt in accordance with the sublimated canons of his own code, insists that the decision issued from the recognition of the holiness of law. The judgment is a judgment of value, the end chosen representing most fully the equilibrium of character which had been disturbed by the atrocious deeds. That end being primary, the means decided upon for its realization are judged to be right. The act is right because it tends to make the supreme end of conduct effective in experience.⁸

(b) The second factor in the problem is the recognition of the moral situation as a complete whole. Three points are embraced in this whole: the sum of powers which the agent possesses, the external circumstances, and the type of character already framed. We are then required to ask, what is the precise personal equipment with which the action must agree and of which it should be worthy? No one would argue that the Hellenic chief had made adequate amends for his offenses if he had merely cut off his right hand or surrendered a part of his sovereignty. Having supreme power in the clan, he must suffer in proportion to

⁸ Cf. Westermarck, "Origin and Development of Moral Ideas," Pt. I, p. 234

his endowments. The common thief might follow the first course and be approved for his action. On the other hand, no man should be obliged to overstep the limits of his capacity or his station. To exact egregious penalties for minor offenses, as was done in England when capital punishment was the reward for fifty or more misdemeanors, is a plain violation of the maxim of moral equality.

The principle before us is one of exceptional importance. It does not imply that we must organize two or more codes of ethics, graded according to the physical or mental standing of the agents. Relativism of this sort would destroy the meaning of virtue and vice. Thus, courage must always mean the assertion of our will in moments of danger, whether in the thick of battle or the devastating routine of everyday life. But the courage of the statesman in thwarting the intrigues of the enemies of government, when his official position, his reputation, or even his life, may be the price of failure, is of a higher order than the daring of the aviator who makes his contest with the impersonal forces of nature and knows nothing of the subtle malice of unscrupulous adversaries. To make decisions under such conditions demands moral character of the rarest quality coupled with superior intellectual gifts.

Furthermore, a judgment must always be made in the light of the total attending circumstances. It is true, as Mr. Paton says, that our decision in any given situation "stretches far beyond the moment" and beyond the immediate environment.⁹ Yet the facts which enter into the decisions are such as we can discern, appraise, and use. What we must not forget is that we cannot conceal our judgment within the sanctuary of our own feelings; we may not plead that it is ours and has nothing to do with the laws of nature or society. Historical criticism has laid down the rule that an event like *Cædipus'* blinding cannot be truly evaluated apart from the conditions that gave it birth. The rule is not only valid in studies of past happenings, but is

⁹ "The Good Will," p. 150.

likewise necessary as a critical guide to future action. The moral agent must use the tools and instruments at his hand. Many a good intention is thwarted by neglect of this principle. Social reformers, political iconoclasts, philosophical idealists, reside in a dissociated world, a world of abstract ideas and depersonalized actors. Hence their recommendations, noble as they may be, meet an unsympathetic reception from contemporaries who cannot understand the notes in the new harmonic scale. But the moment the "total situation" is scrutinized, both the present and the future, the key is changed; and while we cannot play in harmony with the glorious fugues of Bach, we can at least attune our feelings to melodious themes of some ethical Schubert.

To reach the goal, we must obey the simple rule prescribed by Aristotle, that action is moral only when it comports with the established habits of conduct. The Greek moralist insisted on symmetry, a due regard to the order of lines and curves in the geometrical figure. He defines virtue as the mean between extremes, not an exact ratio to be clamped down on every moral endeavor, but a supervisory principle which reflects the steady movement of habitual action. Hence the rule is not abstract in form or arbitrary in operation. His contention is that no musician can, at random, introduce a harsh note in a minor key into the score of a major melody and expect to make it agreeable to the prevailing theme. We might also say today that no artist can fling a dash of paint upon his canvas without considering its place in the general scheme of color and design which he is executing. Current art and music have done both, justifying their irregularity on the ground of æsthetic freedom. The claim is void. Art must be regularized, and so must morals. We are surely within the bounds of safety when we affirm that murder is not a policy which the saint might adopt, calling it the quintessence of virtue *because he did it*.

(c) Finally, no act can be instinct with goodness if its terms cannot be extended to the moral needs of the group. Here the modern note is sounded in its deep diapasons.

Value-judgments which depend solely for their authority on the independent character of the agent are no longer accepted as final. Life is now complex, made so by transportation, by machines, by electrical communication, by the multiplication of trade routes, by the spread of education, by the growing tolerance of opinion, by the organization of an international political control. These are outward and visible signs of an inward principle, which we may call the sacrament of moral endeavor. Virtue is no longer personal; it is social in its genesis and its expression. Goodness is something other than private justice, private charity, private honesty; it is the consolidation of basic social interests in the common will to think, judge, and act honorably.

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CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM

1. Definitions of Freedom to Be Rejected.

It is essential to settle at the outset what specific group of facts we intend to discuss. This can best be done by eliminating the kinds of freedom which do not belong intrinsically to the problem of conduct. Thus, moral freedom has nothing to do with the formidable doctrine of predestination. The conflict between the will of man and the sovereign purposes of the Deity has long been a favorite subject of theological debate. Richard Hooker, in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," argues that the "general and perpetual voice of man is the sentence of God," implying that the decisions of the human mind are the direct and irresistible decisions of a higher Power, even though in conscious experience we *seem* to exercise a controlling share in determining them. Such a definition of free choice cannot aid us in shaping the course of moral action.

No less significant is the attitude of physical science towards the same problem. The world is the seat of inflexible laws expressed in the play of electric and magnetic forces. Every event is the union of these forces in a moment of time and is therefore inexorably caused. The "Necessity" which Plato in the "Timæus" saw operating in the combination of raw matter with individual forms has now been skillfully measured and stated in mathematical formulas. Man has his place in the mechanical order of nature and cannot be exempt from obedience to its laws. His freedom is of the same sort as that of the solar mass or the floating speck of dust. The light of distant stars is *free* to bend its rays when it passes a gravitational field like

the sun. The skiff on the ocean's border, if it is caught in the breakers of the flooding tide, is free to change its relative position; it may empty its human freight into the waters. Can man expect his own course to be different? Choice seems to be the energy which we by intent and will inject into the behavior of body; it is really nothing but our interpretation of necessary reactions to stimulus. "Therefore," says Priestley, "in philosophical language the motive ought to be called the proper *cause* of action. It is as much so as anything in nature is the cause of anything else."¹ In short, freedom is a collateral name for causality and must be tested by such a canon as the principle of predictability. Granting the existence of probable error, we can determine to a nicety what a man will do under given conditions.

The psychologist now enters the lists and tells us what he means by freedom. The human mind is the sum of all the tendencies at work in the structure of the human body. These tendencies are modes of action, automatic, reflex, instinctive, or patterned, and, finally, reflective. They are present only when changes take place in the organization of the body and especially when new adjustments to the environment are required. We must admit, then, that behavior is the function of organized matter and has no value, no meaning, apart from its laws. A study of the evolution of species shows conclusively that the contact of organisms with their physical home has wrought extraordinary changes in type of reaction as well as in structural form. A new adjustment means a new reactive type, and the power of adjustment becomes most effective in the higher branches of conscious life. Man reflects the most complete mastery over environment yet obtained. Here function is freedom; that is, it embodies the power of an organism to control and assimilate all competing forces. Man's freedom is on a par with the spontaneous appetite of the lion or bird, and since his freedom, like theirs, is bound up with a physiological sys-

¹ Quoted by J. Ward, "Realm of Ends," p. 287, Note.

tem, it is useless to seek for a new and superior function as his particular property. If they respond to the instinct to prey on their neighbors, so does he; if they seek association by the demands of sex, so does he. Function is the same on all levels of intelligence, and that man can understand and explain the relation of stimulus to response does not make his action any more free. He seems to *direct* his actions to an end; in reality, he follows the inevitable laws of every organic structure. When he corrects a "mistake," he is merely readjusting his behavior to a new group of conditions. Hence, the best we can do is to study the major deductions of physiology and learn how the body works.

2. Two Historic Solutions of the Problem.

We reject the three definitions of freedom proposed by religious philosophy, physical science, and physiological psychology. They do not touch the rim of the problem which the moral agent is bound to face. This will become plain as we analyze the two solutions of historic moment, Determinism and Indeterminism, both of which claim important advocates at the present time.

It may be well to inquire at once whether they agree in any essential points. In an adequate theory of freedom, two principles must appear, the power of choice and desire as the object of choice. (i) Man must be capable of making a choice; both Indeterminism and Determinism begin with this assumption. The power of choice does not by right carry with it the enactment of the choice in behavior. It is possible for men to choose certain courses, which under no circumstances could they succeed in pursuing. Such a contingency confronts the youth at the threshold of a career. The path is new, though its direction may be known; the currents to be met and mastered can only be dimly imagined. The experience of his antecedents may warn him, but cannot actually instruct. Contemporary wisdom may encourage, but cannot force him to a decision. Let us suppose that he

chooses to enter business. Choice and execution are not the same. A hundred adverse eventualities may arise—his health may give way, the dishonesty of a neighbor may make financial conditions difficult, the social order may be thrown into a critical struggle for existence, as happened in August, 1914. But whether or not choice passes into behavior, both theories contend that a choice can be consciously and intelligently taken. Thus, by mental action, determined or undetermined, the Hohenzollern elected to make his government paramount in the political councils of Europe. By similar decision, the Bolsheviks sought to end the tyrannies of the Czar's régime. In the one case, choice could not be succeeded by accomplishment; in the other, it wrote its brutal tale in letters of shame and dishonor. But the first step in moral endeavor is a deliberate choice between presented objects. If the mind can make no choice, it can do nothing worthy of the name of moral purpose; if it can make a choice, but in a sphere beyond its ability to realize, it has failed to support its moral purpose with the right appreciation of its own powers. Because acts are performed under the terms of the rejected definitions, we decline to accept them as veritably moral. They have religious or scientific value but no ethical content.

The second (ii) point on which Determinism and Indeterminism agree is in their interpretation of desire. Desires count most heavily in the making of conduct. They do so in the behavior of brutes. The difference, however, is crucial. Man claims the right to determine which desire or desires shall have supremacy at a given moment. Hence a human desire is something more than native appetite; it is appetite interpreted by a common end. The Indeterminist may argue that a young man's resolution to enter business is uninfluenced by his father's vocation, by the persuasions of his friends, by his knowledge of his own equipment for the enterprise. It may even be out of accord with his previous inclinations, necessitating the rejection of a course of action for which he had deliberately prepared himself through arduous effort. Still, though the choice is free as

respects the power of the chooser, it is associated with some fundamental desire, such as the inquisitive instinct, love of adventure, or sheer interest in material goods.

Determinism would settle the matter in another fashion, but it cannot avoid occupying the same preliminary ground. It may even be more ready than its competitor to begin with desires, since desires are natural and inescapable constraints. At the same time, every engaging desire is a call to action, an alluring and persuasive call. Schopenhauer has misconceived the office of desire; he cannot domesticate the Buddhist *will-to-nothing* in the social system of the West. Desire is the man at work, with his conquest of forest and mine, an acquaintance with the subtle forces of his body, the illumination of fancy, and the positive exertion of will. The youth is beguiled by the romance of trade, because he desires to wrestle with the elusive laws of economics, to wrest from nature the wealth of her unknown stores, because he seeks to compete with his fellows in the enticing game of accumulation. The entire history of his art, his environment, his achievements, have qualified him for the task and now summon him to an objective choice. The rejected definitions of freedom know nothing of the significance of personal desire as a stimulus to action; they move on a different level of behavior.

(a) Determinism and Indeterminism agree upon the necessity of a choice between desires, a free choice which the agent makes and knows he makes. They do not agree in the manner of instituting the choice. We begin with the latter theory. Indeterminism holds that the will of man is without compulsion of any sort, external or internal; man is at perfect liberty to choose what suits his fancy at the moment. He possesses the "power of contrary choice," an ancient phrase which seems to imply that a moral agent can elect to be honest or dishonest in a proposed transaction, whatever may have been his character or manner of life hitherto. The will is without bounds. Even though we admit the existence of an established self, its laws and ordinances may be disregarded if another type of action

appeals to the momentary desire. There is no power in our past career or present condition to force a choice against our will. If it should happen, as it oftentimes does, that we choose an *undesired* object as the immediate goal, the choice is not the agent's unhindered decision; it is the effect of coercion and beyond the border of true moral determination. Thus, if the youth in question suddenly shifts his emphasis from the pursuit of gain to the pursuit of professional repute, we should be induced to qualify the freedom of his decision. The choice is not his own; it is dictated by the advice of influential friends, or it is a reversion to earlier interests, or it is the result of a sudden temperamental *coup*. Not Hamlet's inner self but his outer madness does the deed.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness; if't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.²

It is possible to split the mind into unequal parts and give the smaller the greater weight in such decisions. So argues the Indeterminist. He insists that the ultimate responsibility lies in the sovereign will. Hence, moral choices have no roots in determined character, determined environment, or prevailing motives; they are independent and unrestrained. There is *chance* in the world; in William James' words, "the chance that in moral respects the future may be other and better than the past has been."³ If every element in conduct is prescribed, what can I hope to do except repeat the past, with its mistakes and inadequacies, its woes and defeats? But let me once assert my individual right to choose without compulsion of any sort, and I win

² Act V, Sc. 2.

³ "Dilemma of Determinism," in "The Will to Believe," p. 179.

the respect of my own intelligence together with the assurance that my course of behavior is now strictly moral.

One further point: Indeterminism insists that conduct cannot be foreshadowed with any degree of precision. Moral freedom forbids a literal prediction of its choices. Some writers, like Professor Laird, have tried to prove that it does not mean altogether what it says. He concedes that, if we could not foretell what a man was going to do in familiar conditions, we should be obliged to adopt the "principle of chaos" as the guide to conduct.⁴ The bogey which pesters the Indeterminist is the fear of standardizing character, and he fancies he can escape it by holding to a thoroughly unrestricted will. Thus, he abhors the cold vision of statistics. Can we tell in advance how many men will commit suicide in a specific sector of the population? Can we go back ten or twenty years, and, by studying the number of incendiary fires in a given neighborhood, like a city ward, estimate how many offenders will be guilty of arson in the coming year? The proposal, says Indeterminism, is abominable; it robs a man of his private choices, it puts him in the same category as the falling stars on a summer evening or the alternation of sun and storm in the winter season. But logic draws the sting of the charge. Statistics deal not with individuals but with types, groups, collective masses. No citizen is forced into a Procrustean bed of averages; he may in the end find his place there, but it will be by virtue of his own free election. If he were entirely removed from conditions that make the law of averages possible, then Laird's apprehension would be realized and the principle of chaos would rule. If man is so free that no observer can foresee the general lines of conduct he is likely to pursue, then his behavior becomes a series of chance reactions without any moral value whatsoever.

(b) This is the case for Indeterminism. Can the Determinist make a better showing? We think he can. His argu-

⁴ "Study of Moral Theory," p. 182.

ment in general is to the effect that conduct is not a set of unrelated choices, but a consistent development of the principle of selfhood. At the same time, he refuses to identify human behavior with the necessary processes of nature. Morality depends on reasoned judgment and the normal operation of organic functions. The norms of body cannot be disregarded; they supply the indispensable background to every sort of intelligent endeavor, notably the pursuit of moral ends. In this respect, both theories of freedom are at one. Determinism adds the further point that the individual himself is bound to his own past when he seeks to make a new choice. What are these binding conditions?

(i) First, freedom exists in every man's experience, but it is circumscribed by the kind of character already developed. The word "circumscribe" is somewhat misleading. It suggests that freedom might be a quality of mind without any limitations. But it is of the very essence of freedom to act within certain bounds; hence the word is not needed, except to remind the student of ethics that liberty is never equivalent to license, the border-line between the two being almost obliterated by the Indeterminist definition. We assume, then, that by the time a man wins the right to call his actions moral he has already established specific habits of thought and manner and that he can act only within the area dominated by them. Some of his habits are the properties of the group, worked out through long years of struggle and revision. Thus, the mercurial temper of the Mediterranean mind, the phlegmatic moods of the Nordics, the Slavic tendency to melancholy, the fatalism of the Turk, the stolid endurance of the Chinese, are traits engendered by conditions of climate, contact with the unyielding substance of the soil, with religious creed superimposed. Even moral attitudes, like the rugged honesty of Scandinavia or the loose habits of chastity in the warmer zones, seem to belong to races or groups and hence to their congenital members. But this is mere generalization. There is no law of race that differentiates Germanic from Turanian. Men have certain traits in common because they live within

the same territory, feel the pressure of the same physical forces, react continually upon the same communal customs. But no two individuals have been cast in the same mold; there is room for personality and for freedom.

The point is clear that every man comes to a new decision with certain aptitudes of mind and body already fixed. To insist that he can by some sleight of hand convert them into wholly different configurations of moral character is to ask him to unmake the course of history and defy the rules of science. The Paul of Jerusalem was the exact moral counterpart of the rehabilitated Paul of Antioch. The contents of his thought had undergone a revolutionary change, but the same moral daring, the same independent feelings, the same fidelity to principles, the same tendency to criticize those who rejected his opinions, were unalterably present. Does this lead to the deduction that character cannot undergo revision, that the leopard will change his spots before the vicious man becomes virtuous? Science and history offer a direct rebuttal. Science advises us that habits of thought alter with the change of physical environment; that man must adjust himself to the new condition or perish where he is. History informs us that virtue springs from vice, and, unfortunately, vice from virtuous situations. Freedom claims its rights in the premises and treats each case with impartiality. Yet, here and there, a man affirms that he deliberately elects to perform the deeds of virtue but is driven by despotic lash into the toils of evil. He quotes the cryptic saying of Socrates that "no man does evil voluntarily," misunderstanding the purport of the argument. Socrates meant that if a man knows the enormity of vice and how it destroys the fundamental purposes of life, he cannot will to engage in it. His modern imitators argue that we commit sin because nature lays too heavy a burden upon untutored minds or exacts too stern reprisals for unintentional mistakes or makes the lure of vice so beguiling that it cannot be distinguished from virtue. In no case, however, is the power of free choice canceled; the commission of sin is willed just as surely as the performance

of a deed of honor. In fine, no character is so debased or so noble that its solidity may not be threatened by a change in personal status. Private honesty and public disregard of truth are not infrequently united in a single citizen. But that the same conscious will should pass from one level to another without encountering an inward contradiction seems beyond the competence of psychology to explain. We may recur to Spinoza's thesis that character consists both of what men have actually moralized and of what yet remains deep in the recesses of the soul, untouched by reflective constraint.⁵

(ii) Secondly, freedom is limited by habitual response to certain types of motives. The problem of moral motivation is a thorny one. It may, for present purposes, be stated as follows: Can we force our mind to accept an incentive that has not hitherto occupied a commanding position in experience? Let us observe Green's simple caution. A motive is not an independent object presented to the mind for consideration; it is the desire with which a man identifies his course of action at a given moment. "This motive does indeed necessarily determine the act; it is the act on its inner side."⁶ At the same time, there were moments, days, years, perhaps, when the proposed motive stood apart from moral experience. It was a possible desideratum only, that is, an admirable end which one might enjoy studying but could not will to entertain as an immediate object of quest. Thus, the warrior may wish for the sequestered joys of the fireside with his family, his friends, and his books. The wish can be nothing more than a contemplated desire; it cannot be converted into an active motivating force. The implication is that another motive rules and must rule under the conditions prescribed. The change in motive is an intellectual act, primarily. We must determine whether the supreme ends of moral living are best attained by the dominance of this motive rather than that.

Hugo draws an instructive picture of a mind divided be-

⁵ "Ethics," Pt. III, Prop. 51, Scholium.

⁶ "Prolegomena to Ethics," p. 121.

tween conflicting desires. Jean Valjean has been befriended by the benevolent bishop and in his hour of need saved from the clutches of the law, which would remand him to the galleys. Gratitude struggles with his ancient enemy, resentment against the order of social law, which had committed him to prison when he sought, by illegitimate means, to save his sister's children from starvation. Resentment is, no doubt, the regnant motive; can it be displaced by a sense of loyalty to his new-found friend? Can the negations of his character be turned into the positive habits of self-restraint and upright conduct? The gleam of the candlesticks fills his eye; the moment is one of crisis, of choice, of decision. Can and will he change his modes of reaction in the presence of an unusually persuasive argument for the beauty of virtue? Can any man force his mind to accept the unaccustomed motive? Is this, we ask, the cancelation of freedom? A man may contract himself into civil servitude, as Sidgwick suggests; can he do the same with his moral liberty? The answer would seem to lie in the fact that the acceptance of a new motive is the act of a free mind. A slave mind could not make the change; it must be made for it, and then morality is gone. The adoption of a new motive, even one that contradicts in some points the most vigorous incentives we have hitherto followed, is the plainest test of freedom on record. But this fact does not destroy the principle of Determinism; the ability to choose the new motive has been wrought out in the long ages of moral growth and acts as the sheet-anchor to moral continuity and conservatism.

One further problem requires attention. If man makes his decision in accordance with the terms of coherent experience, must we regard such decision as final, or is it permissible for him to say, "I could have decided to the contrary"? Determinism does not deny that the content of the act would have been different if the background of the act had changed even in the smallest particular, but it stoutly affirms that, given the same or equivalent motives, the same type of character, the same conditions of expe-

riencing stimuli, in short, the identical self-complex, then the agent could have pursued no other line of conduct. In common intercourse, we recognize the value of the principle when we unhesitatingly say, "Under the same circumstances I should have done the selfsame thing." The reason we persuade ourselves that we could have acted differently lies in the new point of view from which we examine the act *after* it has been done. Thus, in the light of Jean Valjean's later history, it might occur to him to argue that he could have resisted the temptation to steal the bishop's candlesticks. But a great gulf yawns between Jean the thief and Jean the restored citizen. A host of new experiences, many of them morally exhilarating, have swept over his soul since the fateful hour of his theft. The calloused mind of the veteran offender and the disciplined intelligence of the man of virtue are two wholly different organs of judgment. Hence, we are safe in concluding that when the moral agent sets up and executes his practical program he does just what his motivated choice and stable character have prepared him to do. This is not the creed of fatalism; it is the voice of sound common sense.

3. Freedom and the Stipulations of Law.

We have hinted more than once that freedom demands an ordered sequence of thought. Such a sequence is called law. So far in our study of freedom we have confined our attention to the individual's effort for moral self-expression. But morality would be a pale and shadowy sort of behavior if divorced from intelligent companionship. We might, indeed, inquire whether moral values could be created in the silence of private life. The morals which strike home are those of the market place and the camp; the character that fascinates our gaze is that which has been tried in the fires of experience. Taine has trenchantly described the utterly incommensurable forms of art before and during the period of Raphael.⁷ The attenuated figure of the medieval monk is

⁷ "Philosophie de l'Art," Pt. II, Ch. 1.

superseded by the strong and robust manhood of the Renaissance. In the one case, men starved their bodies in order that their souls might prosper; in the other, they trained limb and muscle in the manly arts of the foil and the sword, hoping that by the grace of God their souls might yet be endued with strength. Both ideals have been enthusiastically espoused. The latter assumes that man fights his way to honor and virtue in solid company, while the former prefers the solitary saint, battling for spiritual freedom in his bare cell against unseen foes. Modern thought has no hesitation in choosing its model; it puts the problem of freedom in the thick of human engagements, and asks as the first and most elementary question: Can a man be free and still dwell among his fellows?

What is the seasoned judgment of experience in this matter? Let us assume that two sovereign peoples like those of Great Britain and America have reached a measure of agreement as to the meaning of freedom. We are obliged to live in an omniscient community like the state. If we are to discharge the normal functions of association satisfactorily, we must know the nature and scope of what we ordinarily call "personal right." The relation of individuals in a state is called "subject" by the British and "citizen" by Americans. The second term seems to carry with it a greater degree of freedom, since "subject" implies direct submission to concentrated authority, while "citizen" suggests equal position under the law. The history of the two states shows, however, that both possess the same form of civil administration, with a strict regard for the rights and immunities of the coöperating units. Freedom cannot exist except when guaranteed by the terms of law. Liberty and law are complementary, not contradictory, formulas. As sectors unite to form the circle, so these two constitute the foundation of the state. The superiority of the Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, if it have any, must be sought in this indestructible union. Law limits the activity of the citizen, limits it severely, imposes sometimes pain and chagrin in

its repressions. Still, if law be renounced, then, as Hobbes has proven, liberty disappears in a twinkling.

We have therefore laid it down as a guiding rule that we must know *what* law is and *how* it can best express the fundamental ends of citizenship. This is the problem of statecraft; the keenest intelligence is required for its solution. It deals with the complex mental situations which we have already examined to some extent in this chapter but have not yet examined on their social side. One of the most baffling issues in the field of statesmanship is the matter of public finance. The Federal Reserve System was organized in 1913 for the purpose of controlling the ebb and flow of the banking funds of the country. Its principles have been criticized by one group of operators, who have called them coercive, tyrannical, and arbitrary. They have been accepted by other groups as temporary expedients, pending the discovery of a better system. Still others have found them theoretically sound and constructive. These observers point to the solid achievements of the system at the outbreak of the World War as trustworthy evidence that the financial interests of a great people can be completely safeguarded amid the crash of fortunes and the rupture of social relations abroad. The principle in force is that government may, through its qualified agents, guide the movements of liquid funds, temper speculation in the market, encourage legitimate investment, distribute the moneys of the nation evenly throughout the land. The practical question is, have the liberties of the individual been infringed by the organization of the system? The point is largely technical; but, in general, we may hold that whatever tends to increase the capacity for honorable behavior in the body politic does not interfere with the freedom of the individual.

To sum up: Freedom is conditioned upon the maintenance of proper laws of social exchange. Freedom under law consists in organizing men into communal relations that may emulate the ordered sequences of the disciplined mind. Hence, any limits to individual freedom should insure the

normal expansion of the powers of the free agent. Here, serious questions begin to arise. Who shall define coercion and liberty? Men have always resisted the imposition of sumptuary restrictions, regulating the kind of dress we must wear, the kind of food we must eat. In the present age, a more intimate and intricate kind of prohibition has been set up. In the Eighteenth Amendment, the American public has ordained a sumptuary principle as a legislative fact and in practice has denied its validity as an enforceable law. The profession is affirmative, the practice negative. Statesmen argue that we may keep the principle in the body of the Constitution and disregard its application in the administration of law. At all events, the ambitious enterprise stares the nation in the face as a prodigy of good intention and a monster of inept public management. But the whole issue resolves itself into the one article: Is this enactment a subtle infringement on the rights and privileges of the individual citizen? Law is without authority under such conditions. Law demands freedom, just as freedom demands law. If law becomes coercive, it loses its elementary significance and should be annulled. Whether this be true in the notable case just cited only time and scientific judgment can determine.

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CHAPTER III

DUTIES

The subject of this chapter is written in the plural for a specific purpose. It should be made plain that duty as an abstract conception can have little or no influence in effecting a genuine moral decision. The fallacy of Kant's dogma which prescribes the performance of duty "for duty's sake" has already been exposed. Action from a general sense of obligation usually means no action at all. The alternative course is to set up and enforce the particular duties belonging to a particular type of conduct. Civil law does this in a graphic manner. It informs the citizen in precise terms what he is expected to do and to leave undone. Thus, when a contract is made between two parties providing for the establishment of a partnership for the transaction of business, certain requirements are made binding upon both and cannot be canceled except by mutual consent. It is therefore the duty of each person to carry out the terms of the agreement to the letter. If either fail so to do, he will, upon complaint of the other, suffer the disabilities imposed by law. In every case, abstract principles are recognized and observed; but the emphasis rests on the discharge of the duties indicated in the instrument.

A similar demand is felt in the field of moral action generally. Duty is a specific kind of behavior expressed in a specific and concrete decision of will. It is idle to tell a man that he is under moral constraint to seek for happiness or the realization of self or the development of good character. These are general canons of thought, ends which the analytic mind discusses as possible incentives to conduct. But duty is not general; it is explicit; and we may therefore best exhibit its place in the moral economy by representing its

contents in the plural number. At the same time, we must determine what function duty discharges in man's efforts to adapt himself to his environment, both physical and human. The following facts, therefore, should be carefully noted.

1. Duties Are Rooted in the Sense of Obligation.

(a) There is a sense of obligation in every normal reflective mind. The feeling appears to be congenital; certainly at an early age the average child appreciates the significance of a command to act or refrain from acting. Yet, while the sources of the feeling are shrouded in mystery, its modes of expression are clear and fixed. Thus, obligation and bodily pain are inevitably associated in the childish intelligence. Obligation and loss are interchangeable symbols in the experience of the primitive tribe through the institution of tabus. This means that parents and clan officials employ objective instruments to awaken the sense of duty and compel obedience.

(b) In the second place, obligation is not primarily a judgment as to what we should do but an effort to act in a given way. This is implied in its original meaning; it is also embodied in the root-notions of *duty* and *ought*. All three words insist that men are "bound back" to some law or authority. Duty is what is *due to*, ought is what is *owed to*, the commanding group or person. Hence, obligation is not static but dynamic, as every man who reflects upon his experience knows well enough. It is felt by some authors¹ that the refinements of modern thought have obliterated any reference to an external will such as the group or the Deity. Each individual determines his own destiny, and duty is right action as interpreted by the overt experience and motivating attitudes of the agent. Nevertheless, the underlying symbolism is suggestive. Men are literally *bound back* to the ends which they deliberately adopt. They

¹ *E. g.*, Sidgwick, "Methods of Ethics," Bk. III, Ch. 2.

are *obliged* to make real in action the strong incentives they allow to have place in their reflection. Every citizen evinces his respect for the authority of the state by obedience to its ordinances. Duty is an active, aggressive function; it is a man's duty to be publicly loyal to the institutions of his state. The civil order organizes explicit sanctions called fines and imprisonment to insure the execution of its mandates. Duty, however, is not negative, an escape from the penalties of law; it is positive, an attempt to embody in conduct the spirit and temper of the state.

Similarly, there is a survival of the original meaning of the words in conduct which lies beyond the purview of law. We owe allegiance to the supreme purposes of the moral self; we *ought* to embody its organic traits in all objective contacts with our fellows. For instance, we ought to decline to steal another's goods, because stealing conflicts with the principles governing the relations between members in a social group; conflicts, that is, with the strict adherence which we *owe* to the laws of society. Even in matters that seem far removed from public interest, for example, the decision of a student to devote his career to the investigation of the intricacies of higher mathematics, with no notion of publishing the results of his study or of applying them to the practical problems of physics, it is our duty—something due to ourselves—to make the proposed course of study square completely with the fundamental ends of living. If the immediate purpose collides with a human need, like the support of aged parents, the sense of obligation must be interpreted from the broad view of social responsibility. We shall consider this contingency in due time.

(c) In the third place, the object of duty becomes a law. This means that at the moment in question there is just one way by which the supreme end of moral endeavor may be attained. The Kantian contention that man is an autonomous legislator is grounded in everyday experience. But exception must be taken to his corollary that the "will can

at the same time regard itself as giving in its maxims universal laws.”² The simple fact about the moral life is that every situation is complete in itself, distinct from every other experience, and hence in no respect capable of being an infallible model to future behavior either for ourselves or others. Moral law is not the law of the copyist; we are not engaged in reproducing the magic symbols of a universal creed. The situation which the agent meets has developed from his previous career; it differs from earlier conditions in proportion to the amount of new knowledge at hand for the guidance of the judgment in its new decision. We may admit that certain wide and embracing principles are applicable to a multitude of instances; but the new situation deals with something more than maxims—it contains a congeries of facts that have never yet been submitted to moral scrutiny. Because of this consideration, men may well pause before settling upon the course of action. They understand that a conclusion must be reached, that they must avoid the status of neutrality, that circumstances force them to act for or against the new proposal.

Thus, we may picture the extraordinary state of mind in which the citizens of the Southern states of America found themselves at the termination of the Civil War. There were left them in legal possession their lands, but hardly any other real or personal property. The greatest sources of revenue were by constitutional amendment wholly withdrawn. Slavery was abolished, the ancient patriarchal régime ended. The public moral code was radically altered. By the issue of the conflict, the negro was determined to be a man, not a chattel, a citizen under the organic law, a moral agent with rights and duties such as his former master enjoyed and discharged. How, then, should the onetime master deal with his sometime slave? This was the new situation; so new, perhaps, that no exact counterpart can be found to it in all the history of the world. The situation was an appeal to moral heroism of the finest sort, and

² “Theory of Ethics,” trans. by Abbott, p. 52.

we may well admire the patience, wisdom, generosity, and courage with which the stricken land met its terms. The law of the nation was to be converted into the law of social intercourse. The state had said, there is to be no ownership of human bodies; the individual must say, there is to be good will in dealing with human creatures inferior in mind and in social background but equal in rank before the law. Only the broadest maxim, such as sympathy for the disabled, could be summoned to satisfy the terms of the new situation. Obviously, duty is not the mere execution of law; it is the execution of law in such a way that the true ends of human behavior will be subserved.

(d) Again, duties and rights are reciprocally important in the making of a moral self. A right is defined by Vinogradoff as the "range of action assigned to a particular will within the social order established by law."³ The "range of action" of the emancipated slave included the right to life, subject to the consent of law, to liberty of body and mind, to the possession of property, to free and unrestricted marriage under legal sanctions, and all those conditions which are embraced in the familiar phrase, "the pursuit of happiness." Moral rights are more tenuous in their quality, but precisely as real. They represent the range of action which the agent may travel in his attempt to construct an harmonious character. Thus, men have the right to conceive and make promises. Some truth lies in the partially cynical assertion of Nietzsche: "To train an animal that may make promises—is not this the aim which nature has set herself as regards man?" Certainly he is wholly correct when he assumes that only a person of sovereign intelligence is fit to offer to his equal some word which, while it is a promise in form, is in substance a command upon his own will. We may disagree with the critic as to how far present-day society has apprehended and de-

³ "Common Sense in Law," Ch. 3; quoted by W. D. Lamont, in "The Notion of Duty," *Mind*, Vol. 37, No. 147. See also Vinogradoff's discussion in "Historical Jurisprudence," Vol. I, p. 43, *et seq.*, from which I have taken the reference to Nietzsche.

veloped this force of will. We cannot deny the basic fact that the moral man has a natural right to give and take a contract with his fellows.

But rights cannot stand alone; they do not in law; they must not in the wider sphere of moral conduct. If men have rights, they have also duties. What is the connection between the two? A recent writer has argued that the two functions are complementary, but that they require different persons or groups in order to be properly fulfilled.⁴ For example, Mr. Jones claims the right to hold in fee simple an allotted piece of ground. Such a proprietary right presupposes a more fundamental right, namely, to defend his territory against the incursions of an alien party. This is another way of saying that he can exact fixed and concrete duties from his neighbors. They cannot trespass upon his land without permission; and, if they have permission, then the word "trespass" has no meaning. They cannot change the shape or lay of adjoining lands in such a manner as to cause damage to his domain, as by diverting streams of water that flow through it. These are his individual rights guaranteed by Constitution and law, and these are the corresponding duties which he can invoke the majesty of the law to have duly performed. If the relations of the parties be changed, the same reciprocity of duties and rights obtains.⁵ The same axiom refers to the subtler as well as the more objective behavior of the moral agent. Thus, every man has the right to demand that the truth be told him in every social transaction. This claim has its counterpart in the duty resting upon his associates to tell the truth by word and deed. Unquestionably, the principle here stressed is an important element in moral practice. Kant has argued for the same point with convincing force, even though he was obliged to abandon his Transcendental method in arriving at the conclusion that, if all men tried to deceive, veracity would be an unknown quantity and

⁴ Article entitled "The Notion of Duty" by W. D. Lamont, in *Mind*, Vol. 37, No. 147.

⁵ This subject is discussed in Pt. IV, Ch. 5.

therefore without definition. If no man credited his neighbor's affirmation, social intercourse would be at a standstill and Hobbes' "state of nature" immediately at our doors. To this extent, the interaction of rights and duties as between associated agents is an indispensable factor in moral experience.

But we may also regard the relation as entirely individual: that is, rights and duties reciprocate within the mind of the individual agent. Let us assume that Socrates possesses the right to require of himself, as he did, complete acquiescence in the stipulations of physical and mental temperance. His right to purity of body, to take one phase, is defined by duty to defend his honor against all comers. To be sure, he can demand that society shall exercise due restraint upon forces that tend to disrupt the family or tempt a weaker man to gratify his natural appetites to his own hurt. In this way, his right is supported by his neighbors' duties. But Socrates never fails to demand that a man's private rights shall be interpreted and made secure by his own performance of corresponding duties. Hence, he warns Alcibiades against illicit loves and Charmides against extreme self-confidence. If, in contravention of this axiom, it be alleged that rights are fixed by the decree of nature while duties are determined by the agent himself or by the larger authority of the group, the answer is not uncertain. A right, says Vinogradoff, is the range of action assigned to a particular will within the social order. The "range of action" must be assigned; it might fail to be assigned, as when men have no liberty of physical movement; it may be assigned only in part, in a limited sphere of activity, as when workmen out of a job find themselves without funds to travel to distant parts in search of employment. The right to intellectual freedom is sharply curtailed by lack of education; men cannot look into the deep mysteries of science and philosophy because they have not been taught to seek for cause and effect, logical relations, the essence of universal reality. If a right be a man's range of action, it must be acquired by study and experience. It thus appears that rights and

duties are the same in origin; both are determined by the exercise of powers already granted by nature. A man learns what his duties are by reflecting upon the powers and purposes of body and mind.

(e) One further principle should be considered at this point. Can duties be done out of a sense of delight in the objects to be realized? The stern Puritanism of Kant said, "No." Duty is one thing, affection is another. Duty hangs upon the rational judgment; it is not the declaration of sentiment depending on organic feelings for its support. For feelings change with the changing winds of opinion, and the crowning glory of the Imperative, its categorical necessity, goes by the board. Hence, the moral man must put away his desire to attain virtue by the "expulsive power of affection" as one of the outworn idols of youth. To this argument Schiller has replied in a vein of gentle, though penetrating, satire:

Willingly serve I my friends, but I do it, alas, with affection.
Hence, I am plagued with this doubt, Virtue I have not attained.

This is your only resource, you must stubbornly seek to abhor them;
Then you can do with disgust that which the law may enjoin.⁶

If we exclude love and tenderness and sympathy from the rôle of moral carriers, whole areas of human experience are left bare and sterile, subject, on the one side, to the white heats of uncurbed appetite; and on the other, to the icy hardness of logical consistency, which few minds can understand and none can convert into productive moral character.

Still, we must not disregard the warning implied in Kant's argument, namely, that excessive affection for a given object is likely to distort its appropriate values, both intrinsic and instrumental. Rashdall writes these instructive words:

Love of Learning is good, but the scholar in whom that passion extinguishes all others may become selfish and inhuman, if all social

⁶ Cf. the discussion in Dewey and Tuft's "Ethics," p. 349.

impulses are stifled in its pursuit. . . . Unselfish affection and loyalty to particular persons and societies is good ; but the morality of the man who surrenders himself to it without restraint may degenerate into mere honor among thieves. Family affection may steel the heart against the claims of a wider humanity. Even a genuine Patriotism may produce absolute blindness to the plainest dictates of Humanity or International Justice.⁷

The *via media* is obviously the path to choose. Duty need not be the repellent word that many take it to be. Its syllables are short and not without euphony. Its implications are vigorous, though sometimes harsh; but it is harsh solely because the affected mind does not take the trouble to understand the function of duty in the economy of moral life. The discharge of any moral duty carries with it a glow of feeling commensurate with the importance of the deed. This is the scientific law of behavior. Duty and feeling are not natural enemies; they are sworn friends and abettors. Kant is wrong. Love for the desired object is a strong reason for making it the basis of moral duty.

2. Duties Are Governed by Four Rules.

There are four conditions under which duties may be successfully performed. Aristotle has defined them with signal clarity in the second book of "Ethics."⁸ We can do no better than follow his lead. Moral virtue, he argues, is concerned strictly with desires and actions, and the determination as to what course of action is virtuous implies the kindred duty of strict performance. Virtue is found to be the mean state between excess and deficiency. In order to calculate the contents of the virtue and its adherent duty, four conditions shall be observed. We must know (a) to whom the duty is owed, (b) for what reason it is to be done, (c) what means should be taken to perform it, and (d) what peculiar circumstances attend its proper dis-

⁷ "Theory of Good and Evil," Vol. I, p. 125.

⁸ "Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 5.

charge. It goes without saying that duty is an expression of value based upon an independent judgment; it is not a hard and fast rule which man must follow whether he knows its significance or not.

(a) The first problem concerns the sphere of operation of moral duties. Religious obligations are excluded. It is true that there is a close connection between the creed of religion and the practice of morality, but the connection rests solely in the fact that religion is conceived as an element in moral character and not as a direct incentive to just and honest action. If it be entertained as a separate motive, then man gives up in large measure his right to autonomous decision; he is subject to another will, and ultimately without private responsibility. From a quite different angle, we exclude man's associations with the lower creations, which have no rights to be conserved. Sentiments of pity which animate us in the presence of human suffering may indeed have full play here also, but to formulate obligatory rules is to mistake the scope of ethical values. Shall we decline to use animal flesh as food for the human body on the ground that it is wrong to slay an organism of lower intelligence, just as it is wrong to slay one of our own rank? This question belongs to scientific studies other than ethics, for example, to physiology and medicine, which investigate the causes of pain and the means for alleviating it. Ethics will have something to say about the sufferer's attitude towards an irremediable pain, as the doctrine of the Stoics shows; but, since the only issue in man's relation to the brutes is how to avoid causing pain, it can set up no program of moral duty such as is required when we deal with persons having inherent private rights.

To whom, then, shall duty be done? Reserving for the chapter on "Self-sacrifice" a consideration of duty to one's self, we may lay down here the formal procedure of the man of sensitive conscience. This excludes automatically the conduct of the veteran criminal. (i) The elementary rule seems to be this: a man's first duty is towards persons

affiliated with him by ties of blood and neighborhood. Yet differences appear even at this point. For the duties of father and brother are quite distinct; the former depend on a voluntary acceptance of the family relation; the latter are purely gratuitous. Common law recognizes the same distinction. The father is compelled by law to provide for the child's necessities; the brother is under no juristic constraint to come to the help of his kinsmen. Still, the peculiar interests of the group constitute a moral urge that cannot be lightly disregarded. It is no doubt true that the kind of temperament developed by A embodies the repercussions of the united discourse and behavior of the family. It may represent, specifically, the attitude of a brother B who has relieved A of manifold cares and anxieties. Does this fact create in the latter's mind no inclination to make competent return at some future date? In case of a serious financial crisis in the family, can A be released from obedience to the usual motives, loyalty to tradition, affection for his kind, pride in the rehabilitation of the common fortunes? Duty to one's self and duty to one's associates are so closely intertwined that one cannot be considered without the other. Hence, we should do ill to hold that because the civil law prescribed no obligations in the premises, good morals may be silent also while the plain sentiments of sympathy and gratitude are deliberately flouted.

But let us separate, if we can, the egoistic from the altruistic duties. The simple egoistic relations—blood kinship, friendly attachments, contracts looking to mutual advantage—offer no opportunity for choice. When we are forced to choose between competing groups, what principle of selection shall we adopt? The order of excellence, as Fenelon says, passes from the family to the community; to particular institutions like college, church, profession; to the nation; and, finally, to mankind at large.⁹ The rule is construed by some to mean that duty rests with the segment containing the largest number of sovereign moral agents.

⁹ Quoted by Janet, "Moral Theory," p. 245.

We have already examined the Utilitarian formula "the greatest good to the greatest number" and found it wanting. Moral issues cannot be settled by majority vote, and, by the same token, no intelligent agent can decide upon a course of conduct merely because it will affect favorably a preponderant numerical group. Thus, the expert scholar has before him two possible avenues for the expression of his beloved ideas; he may commit them to an uncritical gallery of readers in the guise of a popular romance or address them directly to a small coterie of thinkers who will understand his arguments and perhaps develop their implications at greater length. The question of duty is to the fore. To whom does he owe the weightier debt, to the wide-lying public eager for a new sensation in science or philosophy, or to the men of mind and genius quietly working out the problems of spirit and matter in the cloistered study or laboratory? The situation is typical of many moral temptations. Hence, (ii) a rewording of the elementary rule is required: Under exceptional circumstances it is the few, not the many, the intellects of light and learning, not the artificially forced intelligences of the drawing-room or the rostrum, that are to be the subject of exclusive moral service. Duty, when pressed hard enough, can itself be patrician in its choice of suitable beneficiaries. However, it should not be overlooked that for the common mind the rule of Fenelon is to be strongly recommended, interpreted always in the light of the next element of duty, to which we now give attention.

(b) The second condition laid down by Aristotle deals with the purpose which duty is designed to fulfill. We have heretofore enlarged upon this theme¹⁰ in the study of the Synthetic Method and need but emphasize its chief point of interest here. Men recognize their obligation to exhibit unflinching courage in the thick of battle, if they apprehend the reason why the campaign is made. To fight for the sake of fighting or because other men fight seems to the cultured

¹⁰ Pt. II, Ch. 8.

Greek nothing short of the exercise of the brutish instinct. On the other hand, to fight for the liberty of soul and body against the threat of abject slavery demands courage of the highest sort. Duty cannot be done except after a thorough scrutiny of the stimulating motives. Virtue, says Aristotle, is action based on intelligent choice.¹¹ Ethics acknowledges the fundamental significance of the principle and gives ample space to its unfolding. If it be objected that meticulous regard to an abstract principle as the ground of practical conduct tends to make morals a set of theories instead of a body of rules for red-blooded men, we may answer that the simplest normal reaction of the organic mind has a formal cause behind it. The bite of the dog, the whinny of the horse, the buzz of the insect, reflect the underlying needs of the organism. We can determine by empirical data precisely what they mean. Is it futile to expect that an act of duty shall *mean* something critically important in the conscious life of the human being?

(c) What is the right method for doing one's duty? If duty be a major psychological act, as practical ethics holds, we must discover the ways and means by which the act comes to expression. How have men attempted to turn obligation into practice? Two types of method may be distinguished, the formal and the spontaneous. The first type is embodied in the consecration rituals of church and state. Every candidate chosen to discharge a constitutive function is solemnly inducted into office by the administering of an oath. The oath stands as the outward sign of the contract between official and institution. The repeating of the words "I do solemnly promise" cannot of itself enforce obedience to law and usage. Yet custom has made the formula an integral part of every ceremony of induction. A public oath suggests the methodical exactness with which the duties entailed should be performed; it registers the seriousness of the obligations which the candidate assumes; it calls upon selected witnesses to attest the fact that the vow has

¹¹ "Ethics," Bk. II, Ch. 3.

been deliberately and freely taken. Iconoclasts have sought to discredit all rituals as symbolic of man's moral infancy; the marriage vow, for instance, should be discontinued, because it suggests that private affections are not strong enough to survive the conflicts of married life but require an extraneous command to cement them.

But the criticism is wrongly directed. Method never sterilizes moral effort when its intent is understood. It brings two valuable assets to the maintenance of moral order: first, it organizes the contents of duty into a habit, and secondly, it instills in the social consciousness the conviction that duty *must* be done. Moral behavior cannot be a series of quixotic motions, taking up as duty whatever matter we happen to come upon, in the spirit of the hero of Cervantes' immortal epic. Men must learn how to perform their daily duties with regularity and dispatch; business demands such service of its successful votaries. Religion cannot be a permanent influence in social intercourse without the power of conserving its high-minded inspirations by means of creeds and ceremonies. Morals follows the same requirements. Honesty is not won by haphazard and uncertain applications of the wish to be honest; it comes by obedience to rule, by the acceptance of the formal principles of honest dealings as the necessary guides to action.

But duties are also spontaneous; they arise from situations with which we are measurably unfamiliar and which cannot be fitted into the moral grooves already carved out. We do not identify them with the simple impulses of sympathy or resentment, as when in the presence of cases of human distress, suddenly called to our attention, we are tempted to "give till it hurts," regardless of prior obligations to family or friends. Spontaneous duties introduce a new element in behavior, a type of personal reaction inconsistent with the normal types of everyday experience. Thus, it falls to the lot of most men to meet once or twice in a lifetime the promoter of vice and crime. So different is the type from those to which we are accustomed that known methods and rules of conduct give no hint as to what

our duties should be. The expert detective has studied the modes of submoral behavior; the judge on the bench has weighed the possible motives in operation; the psychologist determines what forms of reaction generally follow a peculiar mental situation; but the man in the street knows nothing of the procedure that should be observed. What obligation do we owe beyond demanding that the state should put the offender under restraint? Did Beatrice Cenci owe any duties to her reprobate father except to save him from his inhuman obsessions? If the only instrument at her command was the knife, did she do her duty by using it? The example is extreme, yet not without its parallel in every man's career. The petty annoyances of home, office, shop, and casual intercourse require not the summary treatment Shelley depicts, but the quiet, persistent, perhaps admonitory, attitude towards offenders, which should but does not always end in the friendly conquest of embittered souls. When the terms are changed and we meet the qualities of moral beauty personalized in a new acquaintance, as Jean Valjean in the kindly bishop, we pay our tributes of respect without any qualifications of doubt. Carping criticism retreats, fear and apprehension are relieved, the warm feelings of affection surge to the surface. In the presence of holy character, sullen thoughts run to cover; the man we hope to be rises before the fancy, stripped of uncongenial vices, petty or grave, radiant with the virtues observable in the now realized model. Duties, here, are spontaneous; they are guided by no settled mannerisms of the past, but point to a future of moral excellence which is the burden of the prophet and, as Mr. Paton would say, the "policy" of the moral teacher.

(d) Lastly, under what conditions of time and place shall duties be done? We may agree with Aristotle's implied suggestion that actions are not strictly moral unless they harmonize with the external situation. When behavior called moral fails, the cause generally lies in the fact that the action is plainly *malapropos*; it does not fit into the economies of the case. If done under other circumstances, it would be cordially commended. Its unsuitability is often due to an

attempt to reproduce an ancient practice which has no meaning to the modern mind. Social conditions change, customs lose their value and sometimes their objective form. We are advised by the poet that "time makes ancient good uncouth." Are we to infer from these facts that duties are relative, that they have no permanent values, that they vary with private temperament, social atmosphere, and organic needs? Is it possible, then, to know our duty only when the season for acting itself arrives?

The problem again is difficult. We may approach it best by distinguishing between two kinds of duties, definite and indefinite.¹² Definite duties are eliminative; they state what we shall not do. They are consequently general in their reference. Exceptions can be taken only in an extraordinary environment, and then the element of duty practically disappears. "Thou shalt do no murder" is a categorical prohibition valid under every conceivable condition; no provisional clause is allowed. At the same time, civil law institutes a scale of responsibility—first degree murder, second degree, manslaughter—the punishment hinging on the known incriminating factors; the exact gravity of the offense the courts have great difficulty in determining. The line of demarcation between murder and killing in self-defense is, in certain cases, extremely dim. Verdicts may err egregiously for or against the defendant. Murder is only murder when done with malevolent intent. Hence, the motives for the act must be carefully established—revenge, robbery, protection of another's life or honor. Even in this objective form of moral disorder the duty may, on investigation, prove to be positive, not negative. I am obliged by nature and social mandate to defend my life.

Indefinite duties, on the other hand, may be reserved for future performance. It is my right and my duty to exercise freedom of thought and speech. No authority in church or state can force me to adopt beliefs that are contrary to my reasoned convictions; and, since thought and expression are

¹² Janet, "Theory of Morals," Bk. II, Ch. 3.

collateral facts of consciousness, it follows that I have a right and duty to indicate my position on any article of the religious or political creed. But the right and the duty of free speech may and do collide with the momentary interests of the state, as in time of war or internal upheaval. Does duty then lose its obligatory character? May I infer that freedom of speech, being an indefinite duty, is sometimes to be held in abeyance? May I also infer that, while it never loses its moral value as a mode of self-expression, yet it is superseded in emergencies by a loftier duty, namely, the duty of protecting the social group? May I infer, finally, that, in basic truth, duties are relative, not to conditions as they exist in the objective community, but to the levels of value, one being more comprehensive than the other? Applying these principles, we may affirm that the duty of free speech is not a duty at the moment but a reserved right. Hence, Aristotle is correct in his opinion that duties cannot be understood or properly discharged apart from the environment in which they take their rise. The rule is invariable.

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CHAPTER IV

VIRTUE AND VICE

1. Duty, Right, and Virtue—How Are They Related?

What is the position of virtue, what of vice, in the development of the moral career? The question is central to an understanding of the value of character and its conversion into the several modes of conduct. It is customary and no doubt proper to discriminate between the three concepts, doing right, doing one's duty, and acting virtuously. Each of these refers explicitly to the objective aspects of behavior. It is the moral man at work, not the man analyzing his intrinsic moral qualities, that is under inspection. To act rightly is to follow a law which the mind conceives as embodying the fundamental ends of human living. Thus, Tolstoy is persuaded that he could not enjoy the luxuries of his vast estate while millions of his countrymen stood on the brink of starvation; he must eat the bread of poverty even though his family enjoyed the rewards of their privileged status. The law of conscience, the law of right, constrained him. The term *right* belongs to the overt act, not to the constitutive properties of character; for, common as is its use in denoting the value of a motive, every motive, as we have argued, is necessarily prefixed to the projected action and cannot be considered apart from it.

In the same manner, duty represents the will of the agent in operation. To be sure, we may indulge in certain observations of an abstract nature, such as "It is my duty to be honest, charitable, temperate;" but a practical assumption lies near the surface of every such judgment, namely, that honesty, charity, and temperance must be expressed in recognizable forms of action; otherwise, moral values cannot

be obtained, and man's behavior is not different from the brute's. To do one's duty, then, means to follow the law which we have agreed is identical with the needs of our established character.

With two comprehensive and effective terms for expounding the relation of moral impulse to conduct, why should we seek for another concept like virtue? Shall we not clutter up the technical vocabulary of ethics without bringing clarity to its judgments? If Tolstoy acted under the law of right, if he performed his duty in a straightforward fashion, we cannot add to his moral worth by calling the action virtuous. Some thinkers have assumed that virtue and duty are wholly distinct. Virtue goes beyond the range of duty, which is limited by the common capacities of the human mind. If, by extraordinary effort, I pass the bounds conventionally set for the discharge of my duty—for example, if I endanger my life in the attempt to save a drowning man—I obtain at the moment a virtue of action that cannot be included in the simple contents of duty. In other words, it is quite possible to do more than my duty, that is, more than social habit or rational expectation may demand under given conditions. We might contend, as Alexander does, that "though every virtue is a duty and every duty a virtue, there are certain actions to which it is natural to apply the term virtuous," such actions being of imperfect obligation because they lack definiteness of form, seeking a wider field than that usually assigned to their application.¹ But current definitions are never safe guides. There is a tendency to ascribe virtue to those actions which come under no prescriptive command, as, for instance, the suffering of martyrdom by the religious enthusiast for his faith. Duty may be taken to mean obedience to a rule which we are obliged to obey whether we will or no, a definition which excludes the spontaneous expression of individual choice, the cardinal factor in moral conduct. The heroic man who leaps into the sea to rescue an unfortunate victim of

¹ "Moral Order and Progress," p. 244. Cf. Mackenzie, "Manual of Ethics," pp. 343-5.

the waves deserves every appellation of bravery that may be heaped upon his head, but from the secret analysis of motives that proceeds in his soul there will issue only a single conclusion, "I have simply done my duty."

Shall we now agree that duty and virtue are two sides of the same act and require no special differentiation? Such a decision would be palpably false. Society does not fabricate and continue to employ a synonym which solemnly repeats the meaning of another word. It may be remembered that Greece emphasized always the importance of virtue, Judea the importance of duty. Neither denied the value of the other attribute, but each stood sponsor for what most strikingly exhibited its peculiar genius.² Virtue describes action by the quality of the agent's mind; duty, by the nature of the act performed. The distinction which Alexander cautiously makes is suggestive, though dangerous. For, in the first place, the inexorable mold of language applies virtue both to character and to conduct. Mackenzie calls attention to the original meaning of the several words in classic use. *Virtus* in the Latin envisages the property of aggressive action. The corresponding word in Greek (*ἀρετή*) embodies the military qualities of the race—Ares, or Mars, the proponent of war, the patron of valiant fighters.³ The set of a man's mind is revealed in the type of objective behavior. Hence, we may readily transfer the essence of virtuous manhood to deeds of valor and strength.

On the other hand, the "nature of the act performed" reflects indubitably the ideas and habits of thought which are crystallized in what we call character. If Horatio held it to be his duty to defend the Roman bridge against his adversaries, he did so by reason of his fidelity to the traditions and purposes of his tribe. It is therefore unsafe to press too far the distinction just quoted. We can at least keep before our eyes the etymological meaning of the words for virtue in occidental speech. Virtue means the stimulat-

² Cf. M. Arnold, "Culture and Anarchy," essay on "Hellenism and Hebraism."

³ "Manual of Ethics," p. 352.

ing force which makes a subject or idea *what it is*. The virtue of a drug, for instance, consists in the relation of the constituent chemicals which enables it to produce a specific, say, narcotic, effect. The virtue of an argument lies in the order and connection of the several judgments involved leading to a necessary conclusion. Moral virtue carries out the same principle; it expresses the value of character considered from a particular angle of approach, namely, the capacity of man to make his conduct conform to the organic ideas of goodness.

2. Are Virtue and Vice Exact Opposites in Current Speech?

The antithetical concept of vice has suffered from the ravages of fortune. It was intended to register the departure of intelligent minds from the standards of honor and sobriety. But Aristotle soon discovered that a *fault* (the first meaning of vice) could cut in two directions, as excess and as deficiency, and he could set up no ratio which served as an inflexible mean. Thus, if courage were to be taken as the virtuous mean, the vicious tendency might be expressed either by sheer recklessness or by rank cowardice. The former would everywhere be accepted as less culpable than the latter, though it would still be a divergence from the moral norm and hence not the symbol of virtue. Furthermore, the term became a convenient designation for deviation from the conventional habits of the group. Petty vices were freely admitted by men of admirable reputation, while no virtue, however insignificant, could be mentioned except with due respect. It was not a long step in the development of language to carry the application of the term beyond the range of human action. The bite of the dog is merely a savage thrust with teeth and jaws; it has no moral implications; it has not even a suggestion of defect in the behavior of the beast. Hence, while we still keep the concepts of virtue and vice in systematic opposition, perhaps for the sake of logical completeness, we are cautioned not to expect in actual experience a point-to-point correspondence between their

positive and negative values. In fact, no serious thinker today is satisfied to call injustice a vice; he brands it as the mark of an evil disposition and intention. So far has the Aristotelian word fallen into the background of our scientific thought.

3. Historical Meanings of Virtue and a Modern Definition.

It is imperative in the study of virtue that we should acquaint ourselves with the typical opinions which have been entertained on the subject. The philosophers of Greece were the first to make possible an objective evaluation of its meaning, and we may profitably begin with their discussions. The historical order is of no importance; we shall examine at once a point of view which seems farthest away from the modern mode of analysis.

(a) First we shall consider the view of the Stoics. "It is easy," says Seneca, "to excite your hearer to a desire for the right; for nature has given to all men the foundation and seed of virtue." This is the initial axiom in every Stoic argument. Morality is essentially a function of the natural world, not a system of sentiment and behavior imposed from without. Accordingly, it must draw its distinctive aims from the constitutive forces of the universe. There are two principles which give to the world its rational character—order as embraced in the harmonious motions of the spheres, and the adjustment of means to ends. Given these two principles as necessary laws of nature, and we have the groundwork of true moral manhood. Reason, then, is the same as virtue. But, in that case, what shall we do with the appetites and emotions? Experience shows that they stand in contrary relation to the judgment and cannot be reconciled. Stoicism teaches that the wise man must resent the intrusion of all feelings; he must be *apathetic*, that is, without interest in any impulse or sentiment. Pain may exist, but it has no significance for him; he will maintain an imperturbable demeanor. Still, this does not answer the original question: What place have the emotions in the

moral life of man? The answer of Butler, somewhat in the spirit of the Stoics, is much more convincing, namely, that appetites and feelings are integral parts of human nature, exactly as the "principle of reflection" is, but they are exhibited in their true relation by the act of judgment. They thus take their rightful place in the moral behavior of the race.⁴ This is another way of saying that virtue is not native to the breast of man but is the product of struggle against the conflicting forces of impulse.

(b) "Virtue is knowledge," runs the celebrated maxim of the master, Socrates. This has been named the Intellectualist theory of moral goodness. We have already explained that in his view no act can be virtuous which is not based on conscious rational judgment. The behavior of a child, slave, or uneducated adult cannot be moral, because none of them is able to give a true account of the motives animating his actions. The instructed man, on the contrary, appraises the fundamental purposes of life and therefore cannot go wrong. The obverse of the proposition is also valid: No man acts viciously by his own election but only under the urge of ignorance. Both propositions have been savagely attacked, though frequently without a fair understanding of their terms. The man of virtue is wise, not in the sense that he is a skilled logician, but because he identifies his personal character with those qualities—temperance, courage, justice, piety—which embody the basic needs of his nature. Still, a subtle logical circle lurks in the apparent progress of the argument; for practical wisdom, which constitutes virtue, already possesses the cautions and admonitions drawn from prolonged experience. Virtue has already been submitted to the acid test. This means that the man who practices justice has proved himself capable of further exploits in the same field. But the primary problem has not been solved—how the virtuous career actually begins. Logic cannot force the agent to enter the paths of righteousness.

⁴ "Sermons," Preface.

(c) Plato admits the failure of the Socratic method and argues that the proper discharge of all the constitutional functions of the mind is the essence of virtue. The appetitive life requires the virtue of temperance; the emotional, the virtue of courage; the rational, the virtue of prudence; and the correlation of all demands the summarizing virtue of justice. Since moral behavior is pursued on the platform of the social state, virtue will be the adequate expression of the soul's purposes in the intercourse of the market-place and the forum.

Aristotle, while accepting the main contentions of his predecessor, attempts a more concise definition of terms. "Virtue," he writes, "is a deliberate habit (ἔξις) belonging to a mean which is relative to ourselves and defined by judgment in such a manner as a man of practical wisdom would define it."⁵ This is one of the most significant statements in all ethical literature, and deserves the closest attention. (i) Note first that virtue is a habit formed by experience, not a natural endowment fresh and complete at the start. Thus, courage should be distinguished from daring. The latter has no relation to any other process of the mind; the former belongs to a complex system which is set in motion whenever a call for courageous action is sounded. Virtue cannot be a primary law of nature which operates without previous drill, such as the beating of the heart, the association of images, and the like, although modern science is of the opinion that even here a certain *drill* has taken place in fixing the form of the law. In fact, we may hold, as Stewart points out, that the organic senses are essentially "habits" planted in the race and not yet perfect in structure and function. Aristotle accepts the Socratic distinction between the moral and the psychical act. Virtue is derived from acting in accordance with established norms and thus lays a heavy burden of responsibility upon the several institutions of the group—family, school, church, state—with which the infant mind comes in contact.

⁵ "Ethics," Bk. II. Ch. 6. The student may consult J. A. Stewart's "Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics," Vol. I, p. 200, *et seq.*

Furthermore (ii), virtue is not a haphazard adjustment to environment; it is a matter of deliberate choice—προαίρεσις, says Aristotle. This word is full of meaning. It is contrasted with *impulse*, which animals have as well as men; with *wish*, which often involves ideals that we can never bring to completion; with *opinion*, which may or may not have value, contingent on exigent conditions beyond our control.⁶ Choice requires deliberate concentrated reflection, the acceptance of the object as something *preferred*, and an aggressive massing of all our resources to obtain it. Justice embodies all these stipulations. A concurrence of events that *happens* to bring just deserts to an unrighteous man is not in itself a fair sample of a just action; thus, it came about that Benedict Arnold passed his latter days in neglect and oblivion after his betrayal of the interests of his countrymen. True justice can only mean a careful weighing of cause and effect and an attempt to make the reward fit the kind of deeds performed. Such an attitude may be called “preferred,” in the sense that it represents the general type of habits which the agent, whether an individual or society, wishes to develop. Hence, the charge often laid against the theory that virtue is mechanical repetition of action is thereby robbed of its sting. Habit always goes back to the animating motive; it is not a reiterated expression of some native tendency, like candor or geniality; nor is it an unconscious reflection of the prevailing sentiments of the group. Justice is the determined resolve to give to every man a due return for his efforts.

So far, the argument is modern in tone and implication. Can the third (iii) element in the definition be accepted without reserve? Virtue, we read, is a mean related to our own capacities, determined by our own reason or by the exalted judgment of the sage. But how shall the mean be arrived at and what shall be its exact contents? Here Aristotle suffers from considerable embarrassment. Respecting the first, he might either examine a typical human subject

⁶ “Ethics,” Bk. III, Ch. 4.

and, in accordance with Plato's psychological analysis, search out what functions lend themselves to the formation of moral habits; or he might examine an individual man—himself—to see how he actually uses his faculties in performing, say, an act of generosity; or, thirdly, he might compare the whole series of virtuous actions with the standardized behavior of the prudent man. Stewart has stated the second case thus:

Each man has as it were his own moral center of gravity, and all the virtues, related to one another in a particular way, are necessary to his stability; but his moral stability may be assailed in different ways, different circumstances. On the field of battle the emotions of fear and confidence are its special assailants, and its maintenance against them is Courage. Other circumstances have other special temptations, and the maintenance of stability receives other names. But the center of gravity remains the same in all, being that particular *logos* or organization of his whole nature, which is best for the particular man. . . . We cannot conceive of the magnificence of the rash man or the temperance of the coward.⁷

But it may be freely admitted that the virtuous intuitions of most men are short lived, readily changed, blunted while still in action, and that in any case they take their color from the current practices of the neighborhood. Hence, an objective pattern must be set up, as Aristotle does in his highminded man. He is the *beau ideal* of Athenian society; the aristocrat of moral culture; the image of Socrates, who embraces in a single individual the skill of the logician, the imagination of the artist, the craft of the statesman, and the sublime portrait of virtue. May we, then, escape the perils of moral error by throwing aside our own canons of judgment and adopting the Hellenic model? Aristotle did not see the contradiction involved; for how can an independent agent, forming his own habits, suddenly surrender his right to act into the keeping of an external and perhaps arbitrary authority?

⁷ "Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics," Vol. I, p. 202.

But even though we might determine the mean of conduct, could we carry it out literally? A mean presupposes two extremes; but there are many virtues, recognized by all men, which have no such relation. Justice has one opposite and only one— injustice. The same is true of honesty, veracity, sobriety—and so through the list. Men have always been fascinated by a mathematical solution of moral problems, yet the fact is that human behavior is not quantitatively, but qualitatively, evaluated. No ratio that science can fix will ever supply the content of virtue; it must be worked out in the private and public experience of the race.

(*d*) We may now sum up our discussion by a series of propositions expounding the modern point of view. In the first place, virtue is associated with the system of desires which constitute the foundations of all character. The desire for continuance of life generates the virtue of self-respect; the extension of personal interests into the needs and activities of our offspring develops the virtues of benevolence. To every fundamental interest belongs a corresponding principle of moral behavior. Secondly, virtue is ascribed to an organic act the moment we become aware of our intention and will to repeat it. If a natural desire is voluntarily checked, or if, in the conflict of desires, we deliberately emphasize the one that endangers the well-being of ourselves or others, then behavior, or sustained habit, assumes the color and force of vice, iniquity, sin. Virtuous or vicious character means the organization of desires into a permanent system of thought, feelings, actions, in accordance with the accepted interests of the individual or his group. Hence, in the third place, men have organized a schedule of values, conscious and explicit ends, which become the authoritative standards of judgment through the give-and-take of experience. Aristotle's analysis of this schedule, which he calls the Mean, we have found defective. Yet in one point, at least, we may follow his lead. For virtue is not a hard and fast quality, an abstract principle "somewhere in the universe;" it is relative in form and application,

“appropriate to the particular individual in question and the particular circumstances in which he is placed.”⁸ Hence, for the poverty-stricken citizen the value of liberality as an emblem of virtue is extremely slight, while the rich man may find his administration of wealth the distinctive mark of moral merit. Moral relativism has no dependence on a man’s social position, as Plato seems to think; we are not exempt from the claims of courage merely because engaged in civil rather than military service, although many adepts in the art of politics disregard the principle altogether. Virtue is a problem to be studied with all the energy we can summon, and its solution depends eventually on the private reflection and experience of the agent.

4. The Classification of the Virtues.

It was a favorite pastime of the Greek scholar to debate the question whether virtues are divisible into natural classes or whether they are united by a single principle, usually subsumed under the term wisdom. The humor of Plato’s “Protagoras” has often obscured the argument he is endeavoring to unfold. Socrates insists that the pompous Sophist should settle the matter once for all. Is it true that temperance, justice, wisdom, and reverence are substantially the same in origin, but that courage remains an independent and unassimilable unit of virtue? Protagoras holds that a man may flagrantly violate the first four laws of morality and still exhibit a high degree of courage in his very transgressions. Is courage the quality of a thoughtless agent, or is it the product of calm reflection? There is but one answer: Courage is the attitude of the confident soul which has deliberated upon the relations of pleasure and pain and the manner of adjusting them to the demands of good character. This conclusion places it in the category of the other virtues and under the supervision of the common practical intuition or insight.⁹

⁸ Mackenzie, “Manual of Ethics,” p. 358.

⁹ “Protagoras,” pp. 349-351.

But instead of forbidding a classification of virtues, such an argument furnishes the needed materials; for the unifying wisdom into which they are resolved is not in itself the essence of virtue but the mental property which distinguishes moral experience from the ordinary reactions of the sense organs. Hence, when Plato undertook a more exhaustive study of the functions of consciousness, he hit upon three types of moral action which must be brought into an operative equilibrium by the force of justice. The four cardinal virtues then appeared upon the scene and have held their post until today largely because they represent the four great public traits of character that have insured the solidarity of the state and the steady progress of the race. Plato, indeed, committed the same error as Socrates when he confused the moral and intellectual qualities in the first virtue, but we cannot deny the value of the classification. It means more to us than the heterogeneous list which Aristotle has left on record.

There is still another aspect of Plato's scheme that should not be overlooked. He has organized a valuable cross-division upon an entirely different principle. The interests of the individual and society are first separately determined and then duly synthesized. It is open to question whether such terms as egoism and altruism would receive sympathetic attention from the worldly-wise Greeks. A sharp line of cleavage distinguished the citizen from the helot; the freeman had no duty to the slave; he felt no need to visit even the elementary feeling of pity upon him. In the group of citizens, women and children had no such exalted status as modern society has granted them. But the Athenian was conscious of his unmistakable obligations to the state, which was his concept for all extra-individual interests. It is this fact that has left a deep impression upon many writers, especially those of the Continental schools and their disciples in England. Hegel¹⁰ and Wundt¹¹ and Alexander¹²

¹⁰ "Rechtsphilosophie," Teil III.

¹¹ "Facts of Moral Life," Ch. 3.

¹² "Moral Order and Progress," p. 254, *et seq.*

classify virtues according to the types of institutions. The family, the community, the professional or propertied classes, the elaborated social state, have their peculiar qualities; take away the particular relation in the group, and no man can develop the corresponding virtue. Thus, chastity depends for its meaning on the dictates of an organized society; otherwise, the animal nature of man is left to its own operation, and the only possible check on excess is satiety or some other form of pain. The theory has much to commend it, but it fails in not giving due weight to the subjective forms of virtue which we shall explain in a moment.

The genetic theory is of greater value, and our interpretation will follow its general outlines. Mackenzie proposes to classify virtues according to the time of their appearance in the field of behavior. Courage and loyalty come first, since they guarantee personal protection and the safety of the tribe; then temperance and prudence, which establish the rights of the individual, together with justice and friendship, standing for the mutuality of all interests in the group; and, finally, the sentiment of reverence for the honor of manhood as it is interpreted by the principles of practical wisdom. The suggestion is inviting; but ethics is concerned not with the genesis of the virtues but with their meaning, once they are here. What values do they possess for the life of the race? If virtue be based on desire, the classes of virtue will follow the desiderative types in most particulars. Virtues, then, will be both subjective and objective, outer and inner. In all objective desires, pleasure and pain are necessary concomitants. Two of the cardinal virtues stand in juxtaposition to these. Temperance is the virtue that acknowledges the force of pleasure but withstands its seductions to extremes. Thus, the pleasures of taste exercise an appalling fascination upon the unguarded mind. To curb our imperious passions, to challenge temptations at their first emergence, to appeal to reason for an overwhelming command against surrender to impulse—this is the function of the repressive virtue called temperance.

On the other hand, courage is the virtue that acts in opposition to pain. It apprehends the imminence of danger; it faces the poisons and enervations of fear. Courage for the Greek required a public platform for its exercise—the perils of battle, the desolating tempests of the sea, any challenge to the grim threat of extreme punishment. Browning has celebrated in “Balaustion’s Adventure” the daring of Hercules in penetrating the heavy shadows of death and wresting from its toils the fair wife of King Admetus, who had consented to die that her lord might live. The courage of Greece is emphatically aggressive. Men have not yet ceased to admire the heroic mold of classic valor. But modern morality has broadened the scope of the concept. Courage no longer requires expression in some spectacular exploit; it may find its essential meaning in the silent fortitude of endurance. Father Damien carried the comforts of religion to the prisoners of the leper islands and in time beheld the ugly spot of death engraved upon his own hand. The modern hero has no need of public acclaim as an incentive to action. The change is greater because, as Green says, “human beings whom the Greeks would have looked upon as chattels, or as a social encumbrance to be gotten rid of, are having pains bestowed on them which only a faith in the unapparent possibilities of their nature could justify.”¹³

The objective virtues now pass into a wider territory. Courage and temperance in their respective aspects prepare for the distinctively social virtue called justice. If the one knows what pain to avoid, and the other what pleasures to curb, justice on its side determines what pains should be excited and what pleasures awarded. Justice, then, is the recognition of the common rights of mankind as well as of the cognate obligations. It cannot act except when moral agents impose restraints upon behavior; it cannot realize its fundamental aims save when valorous hearts resolve to crush the forces which make equality and freedom nought

¹³ “Prolegomena to Ethics,” p. 315.

but words in the vocabulary of the politician or petty social tyrant.

We turn for a moment to the subjective elements of virtue. Desire, we said, is pivoted upon three universal tendencies—towards truth, towards goodness, and towards beauty. The virtues issuing from them are veracity, honesty, and reverence. They inspire and guide the most illiterate conscience; they conduct to empyrean heights the unfolding genius of moral saints. Veracity underlies all the laws of logic. By its direction men understand the value of the progress of thought from judgmental assumptions to a necessary conclusion. Unless such progress be punctiliously guarded, truth cannot be acquired nor can the goods of life be preserved. Under certain circumstances, the literal interpretation of the terms of truth must be held in abeyance for the sake of a broader end; thus, a piece of bad news is suppressed in order to avoid a shock to the patient. Veracity is always on the side of such a course of action, because truth concerns ultimately the preservation of the balance of character, which, in turn, requires the maintenance of physical life, just as long as the principles of honesty and justice are not thereby controverted. So the regard for truth changes into honesty in our dealings with our neighbors, and at length into reverence before the wondrous beauty of the universe.

5. How Shall the Virtues Be Cultivated?

The teachability of virtue is an academic question which does not need debate. Socrates extorts from Protagoras the admission that the laws of nature and of society are the earliest preceptors of the race. He assumes that the structure of the mind makes education a prime necessity. Every organic body can be trained; science has proved it. The organism that can intelligently guide the development of its inherent properties may expect to go farthest in the acquisition of an independent character. We may therefore seek for the regulative principles that assure a steady progress in the cultivation of virtue.

For one thing, we must adopt a pattern of each quality which may be applied to typical situations. The task is not easy. Even in the comparatively simple demands of physical health, a formula of reference is difficult to set up. What are the marks of a healthy body? Is it muscular energy or amplitude of appetite or quick nervous reaction or the capacity for enduring strain? What, again, is the standard of intellectual competence? A retentive memory, a vivid fancy, a flair for assimilating details, a penetrating power of analysis? In each case the formula seems to be relative, confirming Aristotle's opinion. In the determination of moral values, there are certain factors that make uniformity of definition impossible—natural obstacles such as geographical distance or strangeness of speech or diversity of racial habits; mental inequalities, disparities in the level of intelligence which cannot be removed even by the slow accumulations of time; complexities of individual experience in a particular social circle which forbid us to expect the same understanding of the given formula; and, finally, the sudden change of purpose in one man's career entailing a revision of his judgment respecting the meaning of honesty as a basic principle of action. Hence, a standard of virtuous habit seems like the dream of an optimist. The best we can do is to examine the proposed definition of virtue in relation to the needs of our own character and in the light of the approved opinion of the ages. Such a formula will serve only so long as experience verifies its terms, that is to say, only until wider horizons and sharper discriminations force us to make a new survey of the moral values at stake.

Again, if virtue be a habit, we cannot become honest, veracious, reverent in thought and manner, except by the severest kind of discipline voluntarily imposed upon the most trivial form of behavior. We may apply to experts for advice, we may contemplate ideal portraits for inspiration, we may study the examples of moral defeat for instruction and warning, perhaps even for consolation. But extraneous helps are futile; the Spartan drill persistently maintained

is the sole condition of success in the quest for moral goodness.

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CHAPTER V

SELF-SACRIFICE

Discipline, we said, is a necessary instrument for the creation of moral virtue. Its operation may be obscured by the tranquil conditions under which character develops. The natural transition from youth to manhood, from mental apprenticeship to active effort, is in some cases so steady that the keenest observer cannot detect a sign of the struggle which the process of development entails. It is just the opposite of the situation which confronts the military conscript. Every desire, every volition, every intent, is subject to the control of another mind. Through restraint and labor and pain, he works his way to the level of efficient soldiership. Discipline is on the surface; it is easily a matter of public knowledge. The career of the artist exhibits the same coercions. Genius may be his spontaneous endowment; glowing fancies of color and design may flood his consciousness without exertion of will. Yet he cannot transmit his subtle ideas to canvas or marble without the severest sort of concentration, without a penetrating study of anatomy, of the laws of perspective, of the use of pigment or chisel. Time and discipline are demanded for the unfolding of the most brilliant intellect.

Even when the surface of behavior is serene—a mirrored lake of unruffled calm—some kind of struggle is on foot underneath. Dante has drawn the portrait of perfect tranquillity and perfect love in the person of St. Bernard, his guide to the last circles of Heaven. Here are simplicity of spirit, fineness of perception, greatness of love; but none of these qualities is gained at a single bound. Dante knows human nature too well to paint the picture thus. His own experience has taught him that virtuous character comes

only after the bitterest conflict of sentiments. Hence, he implies that his heavenly guide had faced spiritual discipline without fear and without reproach, attesting the value of the principle which Rashdall has well defined:

The amount of struggle which goes to the formation of a virtuous character is very various. To some men goodness seems more or less to come naturally; to others only after long and strenuous conflict. . . . The needful struggle is doubtless proportionately unequal. But it is difficult to see how without some struggle a virtuous character can be formed at all. Certainly, in the absence of temptation the character cannot be tested; and until character has been tested there would seem to be rather the potentiality of Virtue than the actuality of it.¹

To one aspect of the disciplinary process we shall now address our attention. Discipline always entails some degree of pain. The exercise of unaccustomed muscles may produce a momentary strain that makes the body wince. The solution of a difficult problem in mathematics requires such devoted application as to sap a man's energies for other pursuits. It is not to be expected that moral growth can be attained without the expenditure of effort and the incurring of pain. Moral discipline when consciously organized takes a new name; it belongs to a superintending self, a composite of desires and ends operating within the confines of a single individual. A man is said to deny himself, to sacrifice his dearest hopes, his regnant ambitions. Pain attends the adoption of such an attitude, but pain is not the motive of the action—it is merely a psychological accompaniment, whose presence, however, we cannot afford to ignore. Spencer argues that the same emotional tendencies are foreshadowed in the behavior of the brutes. The tigress will guard her menaced young with the ferocity of mingled fear and affection. The mother bird at times risks her life to procure food for the fledglings. Effort and pain follow equally the checking of private desires and the attempt to obey the social instinct. It is alleged that we

¹ "Theory of Good and Evil," Vol. II, p. 80.

generally obtain an over-amount of pleasure from such self-abnegatory services. It may, indeed, happen that painful experiences in the pursuit of duty are more than compensated for by the permanent satisfaction gained through virtuous achievements. Is the sacrificial value of the act appreciably diminished thereby? We answer, No; because the value of self-denial does not consist in the quantity or duration of the pleasure or pain but in the nature of the ends to be realized. The merits of a good man are not to be rated as lower in degree on account of his delight in sacrifice. Robert Bruce is a patriot, whether or not he can smile amid laborious struggles for the freedom of Scotland. The crucial test of this form of discipline lies beyond the borders of physical feeling, as we shall discover in later paragraphs.

1. Self-assertion Versus Self-sacrifice.

We have learned in our study of Egocentric Hedonism that serious attempts have been made to erect a theory of morals on the principle of self-assertion.² Biology has been called in to give official evidence in its favor. It has been shown that physical struggle joined with craftiness of mind results in the assured safety of the individual and the persistence of his type. The law of the jungle is accepted as the prescribed course of the race, and the law is recorded in the familiar lines of Hesiod:

He is a fool who tries to withstand the stronger;
For he does not get the mastery, and suffers shame besides.

The policy of the strong arm was early assumed to be the legitimate instrument of success. The figures of cave life are so obscure that we can scarcely draw a valid deduction from their movements. We may, however, consult to advantage the legendary materials of ancient peoples who reached the level of organized culture. The testimony is vigorous and substantially consistent. Hercules and Samson

² Pt. II, Ch. 1.

and Romulus are examples of the operation of the law of self-assertion. Later, the strong-arm policy incorporates its tenets in the general structure of government; David, Pericles, Julius Cæsar, beat down opposition by sheer force of personal domination. Then the subject becomes the center of heated debate in the academic forum, with Polus and Callicles upholding the traditional creed and bitterly criticizing the new tendencies as contributing to the moral enervation of the public mind.

Meantime, the self-assertive temper of the single actor passes to the pretensions of the social class. The patrician order at Rome seeks to consolidate its hereditary rights as over against the claims of the awakening plebs. They must not merely hold the symbols of rule in civil office and religious rites; they must also occupy the public lands, the sources of economic power. By a system of closed marriages, they must guarantee that the blood of the gens shall be kept pure. Strange to say, when the Christian church appeared as the new organ of spiritual culture, a similar form of social segregation took place, first as a protection against pagan assaults, and then as a cementing force within the sacred circle. Hence, while the believer might adopt the posture of humility in obedience to the command of the Founder, the ecclesiastical Roman Curia, continuing the assumptions of the patrician class, annulled the essential intention of the command by insisting on infallibility and supreme authority. A Hildebrand, a Julius, or a Leo X summarizes in his career the craft of the Machiavellian "fox," and the spirit of self-sufficiency which is said to mark the character of a successful Prince.

Can this principle be the corner stone of satisfactory moral conduct? We have already examined the arguments for the theory and found them without force. The central objection is psychological. Assertion is a form of volition, which must be applied to the realization of an end. Since the self, which by hypothesis is the end to be gained, includes the will as one of its major elements, it would seem to be mere tautology to say that the agent guides his

progress by such a rule. What the theory actually assumes is that we have set before the mind a type of character which we propose to convert into public action. But the character may vary in content, and one may still speak of asserting oneself to secure its terms. Selfishness, therefore, becomes the prevailing tone. This implies that we expect to gratify no desires except those which yield an immediate and sufficient modicum of pleasure to ourselves. Meredith painted its representative traits in the person of Sir Willoughby Patterne, the accomplished egoist. Selfishness differs radically from the self-love of Butler's "Sermons," which "in its due degree is as just and morally good as any affection whatsoever." They are poles apart in an important particular, namely, that "self-love is one chief security of our right behavior towards society," while selfish action inevitably leads to social disaster. This is the first extreme, the Aristotelian excess—too much emphasis on the fulfillment of natural desires.

There is another extreme where the emphasis lies on the deficiency of such fulfillment, but where the animating motive is still a subtle assertion of self. A classical illustration is found in Ibsen's portraiture of Brand, which we have already in part examined.³ The figure is of almost Promethean splendor. Brand did not blanch before tempests, death, the suffering of his child, the sorrows of his wife, the admonitions of the doctor, the satiric thrusts of the mayor, the uncanny clairvoyance of Gerd, the strange girl of the mountains, the fickleness of the populace, and the roaring descent of the avalanche. He had adopted the irresistible slogan, "All or nothing." He identified his career with the edicts of the Almighty. He was prepared to sacrifice the functions, affections, possessions, dearest to him by organic ties and to exact a like sacrifice from others. Morality and religion demand unfaltering loyalty. He did not understand that such a policy is the essence of self-sufficiency. He rejected the maxim of Butler's, that in the

³ Pt. I, Ch. 8.

conjunction of self-love and benevolence we have a "proof that we were made for both." Hence, we may conclude that whether we cultivate or repress desire *unduly* we are equally incapable of formulating a sound theory of conduct.

2. Two Erroneous Definitions of Self-sacrifice.

(1) It is admittedly difficult to frame a satisfactory definition of the term self-sacrifice. Some have made it equivalent to the sympathetic reaction of common experience. Spencer collects a variety of examples from the animal world to show that the altruistic tendency, as he names it, is not unknown in behavior below the level of man.⁴ Mr. Dewey argues, with his usual charm, that in the Darwinian system "the struggle for existence may take any conceivable form; rivalry in generosity, mutual aid, and support may be the kind of competition best fitted to enable a species to survive." When the same tendency appears on the plane of moral valuation, the interest excited in the cases of the enfeebled or defective contributes notably to the growth of social solidarity and provides a "stimulus to foresight, scientific discovery, and practical invention."⁵ Sacrifice as thus defined refers to the uncritical attitude of natural feeling, the appeal of inherent weakness or social dependence to responsive minds. The affectionate ministrations of the mother to her child, the play of a father with his sons, are stock illustrations. They imply no realization of the meaning of duty, which is a clear factor in self-sacrifice; they imply no understanding of the fundamental meaning of parenthood; they are merely actions that have not yet been moralized by the awakened judgment.

But is it not possible, we ask, to discover cases of sympathetic feeling where deliberate intention is an incentive to action? Suppose we set up a situation such as this. While bathing in the surf, a woman is suddenly caught by the undertow and carried beyond her depth. Her husband is

⁴ "Data of Ethics," Ch. 12.

⁵ Dewey and Tufts, "Ethics," Ch. 18.

unable to save her and instantly cries for help. A youth springs at once into the water and attempts to bring the imperiled bather to the beach. Becoming exhausted in the receding tide, he loosens his hold just as another rescuer arrives on the scene, and, before he can be seized by willing hands, he is himself swept out of reach and borne swiftly to his death. Is this an instance of self-sacrifice? Obviously, the youth paid for his valiant deed by his life. Self-sacrifice, we shall argue, is a conscious and intentional surrender of some private good, either for a moral principle or for the determined benefit of another. The latter fact is clearly an element in the present situation. No one can mistake the objective merit of the act, nor may one underestimate the quality of courage embodied in the hero's behavior. Still, it is open to question whether the particular virtue called self-sacrifice has a right to a place here. Is it at all certain that the young man was cognizant of the danger involved? May we not suppose that he regarded his plunge as a sporting venture which would bring no harm but much exhilaration? We do not belittle the achievement. But ethics demands exactness in fixing motive and intent; it is not satisfied with generalities. It should appear as we proceed that the incident is susceptible of another sort of classification, without in any way diminishing its intrinsic moral worth.

(2) The first definition emphasized the claims of inclination. The second negatives those claims. The ideal of asceticism is one of the weird delusions of the race, garbing itself in a multiplicity of shapes. The theory of "sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice" is a new paradox, on a par with that of pleasure and virtue and incurring the same penalty, namely, the extinction of the quality at which it aimed. For this reason nothing is more futile than the long vigil of St. Simeon Stylites. It is therefore proper to distinguish between the purpose of the program and its method of execution. Ordinarily, it avows an utter disregard of the functions of body, representing them as transient and ignoble impediments to spiritual culture. The Cynics of Greece, the Eclectics of Rome (with a highly adulterated

asceticism), the monastic system of the Catholic Church, the Hebraic revulsion against the Renaissance as expressed in English Puritanism, are samples of the self-renunciatory programs emerging in successive ages. Is it reasonable for a man to renounce adherence to common desires merely because some of them, when unduly stressed, have led to vicious practices? Shall we be forced, for example, to abandon the joys of family life on the assumption that the sexual appetite is the sole basis of the marriage relation and is itself incurably evil? Must we go further and allege that such a quality as pride is the product of social intercourse with our fellows and should be rigorously excluded, whether in the endeavors of the man of science or in the consolidated habits of the state?

The validity of the guiding purposes may be seriously questioned; may we also question its method of execution? Two types have been used in making the *ἀσκησις* effective. The one prescribes removal from the centers of habitation to the wastes of the desert or the solemn fastnesses of the mountains. It is gravely argued that if stimuli to sin are absent, the corresponding responses will be inhibited. This means that temptations arise from without, not from within, the mind affected. It is, however, the recorded verdict of experience that the cell breeds torments quite as powerful as those of the market or the house of pleasure. Evil is not an ingredient of sense but a suggestion of will. Nor does the other type of practice prove more successful. The ascetic argument assumes that pain, when inflicted for a certain end, will heal the ills of soul. Flagellation, laceration, fasts, hard labor, have been applied to dull the edge of appetite. The process is without results. Neither ethics nor religion will answer affirmatively the ancient question, "Shall I give the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Physical pain voluntarily accepted cannot subdue or chastise an unrepentant spirit. Nor can any kind of sacrifice, whether of mind or body, in its own right bring a man into proper relations with his group. Seclusion may shade the man from social contempt; it cannot atone for a moral wrong.

Only the chastened mind flowering into noble acts of charity can restore the offender to his place as a morally qualified member of society. This is Dostoevsky's thesis expounded in the life of Father Zossima, one of the striking characters of the novel "The Brothers Karamazov."

3. Self-denial and Self-sacrifice—Are They Different?

We have assumed in the foregoing sections that some form of renunciation is possible. This assumption has been challenged from two quarters. (i) The partisans of Hedonism contend that no action can be taken which will not yield a surplus of pleasant feeling. They point to the religious martyrs who have gone singing on their way to glory amid the crackling flames. They exhibit the political henchman who steps aside from his candidacy for office in deference to the will of the "boss," in the bold hope that his future is thereby assured, or, at least, that his submission will be applauded as done for the party's good. In each case, the majority of happiness-units is palpably on the side of the renouncer. It must follow that the dogma of sacrifice is a myth. (ii) On the other hand, the self-realizationists contend that the moral self possesses a thousand variant facets, each with its own luster. The luster on some may be extremely dull, but the total effect on the eye is steady. Though the analogy is not perfect, it has its suggestions. The principal point in human experience is not the single act that brings pleasure or pain, but the ultimate unity of the rounded self. Pleasure and pain are essential processes in behavior, but the law holds that when happiness is surrendered a new step in man's progress towards the goal of achievement has been taken, and that this fact is the compensation for any loss sustained. Again, sacrifice is excluded.

The problem, however, is not so readily settled. The trouble lies not with the definition but with the nature of the idea to be defined. The realistic method of ethics begins with the concept of desire. First, it affirms that desires be-

longing to the internal behavior of the mind cannot be negated, that is, can never be relieved of their full and efficacious functioning. These desires, we said, embrace the virtues of veracity, honesty, and reverence, and these are the virtues which, in the historic study of the case, have been integrally associated with the self. Thus, Marcus Aurelius describes the moral man as a citadel, a headland, with the cardinal properties of moral character forever determined. Such virtues can never be surrendered; hence, the sacrifice of veracity is impossible. Such a suggestion contradicts the meaning of the concept and sets up what the logician would call a "judgment of infinite negation." It is the same as saying that we can annul the principle of self-preservation and still guarantee life to the organism. The truth is that moral character is destroyed if its constitutive virtues are impaired. The argument has been succinctly stated by Kant:

Supposing it to be a universal law that everyone when he thinks himself in a difficulty should be able to promise whatever he pleases, with the purpose of not keeping the promise, the promise itself would become impossible, as well as the end that one might have in view, since no one would consider that anything was promised to him, but would ridicule all such statements as vain pretenses.⁶

Still more forcibly has Sir Walter Scott driven home the same inevitable truth. Jeanie Deans, the half-sister of Effie, who is on trial for the murder of her child, cannot tell a lie to save her sister from death. The definition of self-sacrifice is exact and compelling. Can a moral agent surrender his primary virtues in the interest of personal affections or social good? The challenge is broad; it comprehends a wide area of human effort. Can an artist sacrifice his devotion to the ideal of beauty as his mind conceives it, because friendship binds him to men who espouse a more bizarre form of æsthetic expression? Can a statesman surrender his reverence for the religious creed of his fathers, in return

⁶ "Theory of Ethics," trans. by Abbott, p. 40.

for some rare opportunity to serve his country? The wail of abortive sacrifice rings ominously in the ear:

O Cromwell, Cromwell,
Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

We turn next to the group of desires where sacrifice assumes a meaningful character. They may be subsumed under the Greek virtue of temperance, self-restraint, and, when applied to the modern situation, may be called actions of self-denial. Is it true that self-denial and self-sacrifice refer to different moral programs? Opinions differ. Green uses the words indiscriminately; Alexander clings to the second as though the other did not exist. Self-denial seems to be such an attitude and such behavior as restricts the fulfillment of the outer group of desires in favor of the more refined. We need not, like Plotinus, feel humiliated because the pleasures of body take an almost unreleasable hold upon the will. To resist such seductions is the office of the virtue of temperance; failure to do so would lead to the vice of intemperance. But there are virtues in the same field which must, at times, be surrendered, because they conflict with the attainment of still higher goods. Multitudes of men, after careful consideration of the facts, decline the attachment of home and family and devote their time and energy to the study of the deep truths of science and philosophy. The charges of sex antipathy, of love of solitude, or of overweening ambition are baseless. Spinoza and Immanuel Kant addressed themselves to the hard problems of mind and matter, sternly inhibiting every inclination that blocked the way. This is the meaning of self-denial; and, while the Greek could not understand its breadth of application, the modern man is confronted with a specific choice: Shall he yield to the delights of the senses, which in themselves carry no prejudice, passing a life of economic ease and mental exhilaration, or shall he adopt the formula that "man cannot live by bread alone," but solely by the hard

labor of brain and body, in his effort to develop a character of strength and nobility? This is the meaning of self-denial.

Sacrifice, on the other hand, refers particularly to the surrender of goods for the sake of our neighbor. Green is correct in saying that it is "not the mere sobriety of the appetites but the production of that sobriety in the civil spirit" that gives virtue its permanent value. Modern morals have extended the scope of the principle by giving up certain forms of happiness which the Greek regarded as inalienably his own. The change is due to the new interpretation of social desires.

"There are men, we know," says Green, "who with the keenest sensibility to such pleasures as those of 'gratified ambition and love of learning,' yet deliberately forego them; who shut themselves out from an abundance of æsthetic enjoyments which would be open to them, as well as from those of family life; and who do this in order to meet the claims which the work of realizing the possibilities of the human soul in society—a work a hundred-fold more complex as it presents itself to us than as it presented itself to Aristotle—seems to make upon them. Such sacrifices are made now . . . because with the altered structure of society men have become alive to claims to which, with the most open eye and heart, they could not be alive then."⁷

The annals of recent history are filled with glowing sentences reciting the offices of self-sacrifice as they are performed under the inspiration of the new principle. Amid the revolting brutalities of the cataclysm in Russia and its preparatory stages, certain figures stand out in heroic proportions, and none more so than that of Mme. Brevskovsky, surnamed the "little grandmother of the Russian Revolution." Early in her career she came to the parting of the ways; family ties and zeal for the freedom of her people were incompatible motives. She must choose between them. With aching heart she committed her child to the custody of responsible friends and gave her time to the supreme crusade, facing imprisonment, the dreary wastes of Siberia,

⁷ "Prolegomena to Ethics," Sec. 269.

even death, in pursuit of her ideal. It is a matter of record that the heralds of civil liberty have contributed enormously to the temper of the new civilization. Greece, no doubt, could not understand such sacrifice, because Greek morality was the privilege of the few, not of the enfranchised many. Today, with the dogma of equality staring us in the face, the duty to society is a prescription that cannot be refused. If necessary, men must surrender their persons in support of the social creed. Political party, religious sect, academic institution, the nation in its corporate capacity, must feel the urge of the finer passion. The elementary axioms of Hellenic morals no longer suffice; self-interest changes into self-surrender at the call of the larger whole.

4. Dangers of Self-sacrifice.

But are there no dangers that dog the footsteps of sacrifice? Unfortunately, the principle lends itself all too easily to insidious perversion. There is the danger that sacrifice may become the end in itself instead of being the means for reaching an end. Spencer holds out the hope that altruism (another name for self-sacrifice) may become the ruling policy of social exchange. Let us suppose that such a condition should actually be realized, that the natural impulse for self-appreciation should be cancelled, and every citizen solemnly engage to promote the interests of the group alone. Appalling contradictions would at once arise. If a devoted mother dedicates her life exclusively to securing happiness for her child, the chances are very great that she will train an undesirable, perhaps a dangerous, member of the community. If a government official—assuming the case to be likely—were to “work his fingers to the bone” in discharging his trust to the nation, he would almost certainly meet the grim reminder that republics are notoriously ungrateful and that he has spent his labor in vain. Society has no need of extreme models of sacrifice; it seeks to cultivate citizens who can maintain a just and healthy balance between individual desires and social obligations, remem-

bering the maxim of Butler that these two were "meant for one another." To be sure, Guyau praises in eloquent terms the "metaphysical risk" of the martyr and the self-renouncing scientist and regards their behavior as an expression of the "vital forces that demand to be spent."⁸ Rhetoric, however, must be supplemented by common sense and rigid logic. Experience tells us that the vital forces can be expended up to a certain point and no further; thereafter, every sacrificial action is a dead loss to morals. The principle of adjustment is common to all natural phenomena; it cannot be dispensed with in the definitive conduct of mankind. No physician can overtax his physical strength and expect to be able to preserve his professional prestige unimpaired.

There is a second danger, of a strictly private sort, which has brought the policy of self-sacrifice into disrepute. We may note the distinction between a fellow-feeling that springs spontaneously, so to say, from the goodness of the heart and that self-conscious and carefully regulated renunciation which leaves a touch of bitterness in the recipient's mind. Such sacrifice frequently carries with it a demand for compensation. Religious communions are only too prone to countenance what is in reality so fatal an impediment to high moral devotion. They deliberately canonize those who have thwarted the common purposes of human behavior, and, in some cases, as in the institution of the celibate clergy, formally impose a severe restriction upon important natural offices. In every instance, there is an irresistible conviction that a specific loss has been sustained and that the loss should be made good in some concrete fashion. Many a man who has been persecuted for his economic, political, or religious faith has entertained against the social group a silent claim which he expects to have satisfied in due time. It is not unknown that college teachers, suffering ostracism for their adherence to the letter of the moral commandments or exclusion from their positions be-

⁸ "Morality Independent of Obligation or Sanction," pp. 145-6.

cause of views antagonistic to the official dogma, have converted this sacrifice into a debt which they hope the academic world will settle magnanimously. All these phases of the policy help to excite mistrust of its moral validity and social usefulness. They constitute a danger which every agent is liable to find lurking in his consciousness. Hence, the familiar maxim may serve as a check to self-assurance, "Every man may have the defects of his own virtues."

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CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

We have discussed at length some of the basic problems in moral experience: the sources of knowledge, the principles and limits of freedom, the nature and types of duty, the meaning of virtue, and the voluntary curtailment of individual gains, commonly called self-sacrifice. In the interpretation of each problem, we have assumed that every man lives in a world peopled by intelligent beings like himself; and that, in general, powers are equal, and hence, that what one person can do, his neighbor under the spur of equal tuition may do likewise. We have also assumed that human experience does not differ from age to age—the same system of desires, the same modes of expression, the same bulk of achievements, appearing always. Such an intriguing book as Lecky's "History of European Morals," or that ancient classic which we know as Plutarch's "Lives," establishes with sufficient clearness the axiom that men have changed little within the compass of the Socratic era, which embraces not alone the intellectual and moral phenomena of the Athenian group, with the addendum of Rome, but also those of London, Paris, and New York in the twentieth century.

These two facts demonstrate the contention of the Greek ethics, that morality is in no sense a private or sequestered process but is always the collective endeavor of a socialized class. It is sometimes needful to remind certain types, especially the æsthetic and religious, of this cardinal principle. The creative activity of Dürer and his gifted colleagues in Nuremberg, the institution of the orders of the preaching friars as a protest against the emasculating tendencies of monastic rule, in the results of their activity, carried on

among their fellows, show how stoutly nature has forged the links of social attachment. The conclusion reached in the previous chapter is true—any form of undiluted moral self-assertion will suffer shipwreck.

1. Social Interactions and the Concept of Equality.

Having adopted the communal idea as the major term in the logic of experience, we shall attempt to envisage as a concrete problem the interactions of a compact mass of humanity in a typical modern state. Despite the permanence of inherited moral traits, the conditions under which men live have undergone a noteworthy evolution. We begin with the relations of individuals within a settled community. The sharp demarcation of interests between the freeman and helot in the city-state of Greece makes possible but one type of moral reaction, namely, that the citizen alone possesses the marks of potential virtue; hence, morality is strictly aristocratic in spirit and scope. The native Roman and his subject neighbors bear the same civil relation both under the Republic and the Empire. Superiority is grounded on physical prowess and soon passes to the manners and habits of the public character, being finally crystallized in distinctive institutions—the Senate, the religious auspices, the triumphs of victorious generals, the deification of the emperors. It is true that Ennius, scion of a vanquished race, may still sing the praises of conquering Rome together with her radiant heroes, among them Scipio Africanus, a friend of the poet:

Here he is laid whom no man, whether foeman or comrade,
Ever was able to give a recompense worthy of his deeds.

But the fact remains that a social gulf is fixed, deep and wide: on the one side, the enfranchised citizen, the man of might, the man of mind; on the other, the subject crew, "taking their purposes" as servants from the will or whim of their superiors.

Not different in effects, though in origin far apart, is the relation in the Middle Ages of the dignitaries of the church and obedient laymen. History cannot conceal the luster (or, as some say, the sinister darkness) of the day when Henry, King of Germany, presented himself before the castle at Canossa to implore the Pope's withdrawal of the edict of excommunication. "If he be truly penitent," said Hildebrand, "let him place his crown and all the ensigns of royalty in my hands, and openly confess himself unworthy of the royal name and dignity." Kingly splendor and a warrior's arrogance could not avail against the spell of ecclesiasticism which was woven about the fancy of both trained courtier and illiterate peasant. For three days Henry stood in abject submission in the gathered snow before the shut gates, as he received the most humiliating terms from the emissaries of the Pope.¹ The act symbolized also another sort of inequality which had settled its bitterness upon the craven populace of Europe. Superiority rested, not in intellectual gifts or in weapons of war, but in the subtle enginery of religious fervor, which in an age of great moral confusion was subsidized and used by designing men to safeguard their social interests.

Finally, the time arrived when the submerged masses became conscious of the unequal distribution of social endowments, whether religious, economic, or political. The monk of Wittenberg challenged the authority of the Holy Father in countenancing practices, such as the sale of indulgences, which both contravened the fundamental principles of the moral code and brought shame on the offices of religion. Moral equality is shattered if one man must bear the brunt of punishment while another escapes unscathed through the meretricious devices of superstition. The same demand is heard in the civil chancelleries of England. Legal mandates, men said, must originate in the will of the people, not in the presumptions of the crown. The ship tax in the mother country and the stamp tax in her colonies awoke a

¹ Milman, "History of Latin Christianity," Bk. VII, Ch. 2.

determined protest from the citizens. Still later, the economic inequalities of the social structure of France came to expression in the convulsions that overthrew her historical dynasty. In the grim shadows of its ruins, men registered their deliberate vows that they must and would obtain their own fair share in the physical and cultural goods of communal life. The old distinction between privileged and unprivileged disappeared. A new note was sounded in social behavior, a note that rang with the assurance of recognized personality, the individual's right to consideration by his neighbors and the state.

What does the concept of equality signify in moral experience? We are to answer from the testimony of existing conditions. It does not mean equal intellectual endowments. Democracy has never boasted that it could change the natural constitution of the mind. It merely contends that education as a social instrument should endeavor to unfold the potential capacities of every child. The methods pursued possess no magic; they do not make ordinary intelligence into imposing genius. They are to be flexible, suited to the aptitudes of different pupils. The claims of a classical education make no appeal to minds which have only motor responses as their major expressions. Hence, education in a democracy should never attempt to standardize curriculum or student intelligence. Plato saw the truth unerringly; there are diversities of gifts, to satisfy economic needs, to defend the social unity, to develop the æsthetic and religious nature. Different grades of mental ability are required for these three tasks, and nature makes the minds to perform them. Hence, education must adapt its forms to draw out the salient possibilities in every case.²

Again, equal rights do not include an equal share in the material goods of the community. This, however, does not give moral warrant for the existence of excessive individual wealth and debasing poverty. It is said that two per cent of the population controls ninety-eight per cent of

² Cf. Pt. IV, Ch. 6.

the vested property of the country. Such figures amaze and alarm; they have already registered their protest in the actions of legislative bodies—collateral inheritance imposts, surtax on large incomes, limitations to the activities of corporations. At the same time, it may be taken as an axiom that no government can guarantee equal capital or equal return on investment to every citizen, simply as citizen, regardless of other considerations. If it should happen that two men receive the same amount of money for different types of services, the value of such services depends not on the money returns but on the kind of efforts expended. A judge on the bench may have the same salary as an expert plasterer, but the sum means utterly different things to the two men. No serious observer can doubt that, considered simply from the results obtained, the moral destiny of the social group hangs upon the decisions of the judge much more intimately than upon the skill and diligence of the artisan. In short, moral influence and the currency of the republic are incommensurable terms.

It is further suggested that a valid social station should be awarded by law to all *bona fide* citizens. Theoretically, this is incorporated in the body of the American Constitution, and certainly Congress has refused on notable occasions to pass any acts that directly insure special privileges to one man or group of men. It confers no emblematic distinctions; it sets up no rankings in civil life, such as those embraced in an "establishment of religion." On the other hand, it insists that positions in the civil service shall be obtained strictly on merit and by due examination. From the very beginning of the Government, the principle of a legalized social class has been abhorrent. We have not even trained a body of men to occupy important posts in the diplomatic corps. Fear of a privileged coterie is endemic in the national mind. To make such an eventuality as its establishment impossible, the Fifteenth Amendment was enacted, ostensibly to safeguard the position of the emancipated negro, in reality to keep the reins of government in the hands of the public. But nothing that Congress has done or

can do will change for a moment the social station of the citizen, which depends exclusively on his natural equipment, personal environment, and mature experience.

Where, then, is the equality which democratic institutions provide? It is embodied in the concept of law, and law is made to govern the expression of personality, not simply the outward conditions of its existence. Yet, since behavior develops in the close conjunctions of a civil society, we are obliged to study the reactions of law upon the entire community as well as upon a single individual. Law is true to its name and intent only when it distributes rewards and penalties in accordance with the calculations of personal worth. But there are certain maxims that apply without qualification to all citizens, and the beginnings of true equality lie at that point. Thus, law is administered by the courts of justice, whose determinations, at least in Anglo-Saxon countries, furnish the grounds of private and public security. Hence, it is imperative that no hindrances shall be put in the way of humblest clerk or workman to obtain adequate redress for his grievances, provided that it does not interfere with the rights or immunities of someone else. The danger that confronts the practice of democracy is that interests of greater scope and influence may block the exact award of justice. This does not imply incompetency or venality on the part of the judges; it may mean that by sharp tricks of presentment counsel for a corporation or a wealthy citizen can prolong litigation either beyond the endurance of the opposed litigant or even beyond the legal statute of limitation. There are also ways by which testimony which is central to the understanding of the case may be excluded as irrelevant to the immediate situation or prejudicial to the interests of the defendant. These considerations show how difficult it is to secure equal treatment for different suitors at the bar of justice.

Furthermore, equality before the civil law must be supplemented by some sort of approximation to economic equality. "To confide to a mass of men," says Laski, "the control of ultimate political power is broadly to admit that

the agencies of the state must be utilized to respond to their needs.''³ History and nature have placed the two sets of interests in proximity. In England in the eighteenth century, the unenfranchised peasant was confined bodily to a certain territory and could not withdraw therefrom except upon official permission, becoming thus, to all intents and purposes, the indentured servant of the group. The granting of suffrage removed such a burdensome restriction. Workmen could pass from one town to another in search of work much as they do at present. Still, under the best conditions, freedom of action is not complete. The facts are brutally plain: men with large family obligations cannot easily break up their domicile at the call of necessity and seek employment in a distant city. There are also certain mental factors in the situation. It is on record that employees may, at times, have no choice of opinions in matters of public concern. If an employer stands for a particular theory in economics, his workmen entertain and express other and contrary views at their peril. The day is not long gone when manufacturers served notice on their staff that they must vote for the party which championed the protective tariff or lose their jobs through recalcitrancy. Here equality is but a sham, and the law gives no redress; we may appeal to it in vain.

Still, the demand for the right of private judgment is unchecked, and ethics must attempt to settle the problem. Obviously, it cannot be settled by the forcible methods once in vogue. In the debate on the question of a "living wage," strong blows have been struck on either side, without reaching a permanent basis of settlement. Lockouts and strikes now appear to be almost antiquated as instruments of decision; in the light of the new principles of conference and co-operation, they seem to have lost their vigor. The gigantic effort to organize English workmen of all crafts into a General Strike, much as England had organized her resources for war a few years before, was conspicuously abor-

³ "Grammar of Politics," Ch. 4.

tive, not because the stimulating cause was not just, but because the method adopted no longer satisfied the requirements of social intercourse. Morality is not essentially combative; it is coöperative. There are points of value in the contentions of both capital and labor. Both kinds of services are needed for the economic safety of the state, and a thorough examination of the worth of each will determine what the appropriate rewards shall be. We may therefore conclude that reciprocal sacrifices of dominant values must be made, such, for example, as the extension of profits beyond a certain percentage or, on the part of the men, a demand for undue participation in the management of the company. The final test is the welfare of the social group.

2. Social Interactions and the Influence of the Machine.

If it be asked what external agency has exerted the greatest influence over the movements of modern life, we should no doubt point at once to the machine and all related contrivances. Habit and experience have already accustomed us to the use of mechanical power, but we seldom stop to estimate the ethical implications growing out of the new social conditions. Tools and machines stand as contrasting instruments of industrial production. Are the effects on experience different? Workers in wood and metal—Veit Stoss and Peter Vischer in the workshops of Nuremberg—brought a high degree of ingenuity to their respective tasks, and the creations of their handiwork bear to this day the impress of their great intelligence and skill. Do the men who manage machines or feed the great molten seas of iron possess the same degree of intelligence? They must understand the structure and function of their instruments of production, they must correct mistakes and anticipate failures, acting as a kind of mentor for their proper functioning at all times. Still, in one respect the machine worker lags behind his historic prototype. Says Professor Mecklin:

His ideas must fall within the fixed mechanical units of grade, weight, size, demanded by the machine process. The intelligence of

the worker is not necessarily lowered or dwarfed by the machine. It is, however, very definitely limited to quantitative terms that make for mechanical efficiency. His thinking must center around the fundamental principles of the machine, namely, the sequence that lends itself to exact units of measurement.⁴

It is needless to infer that the modern workman lacks the vital power of creation merely because he has little chance for its expression in individual forms. But we can surely assume that true personality consists in mastering the process to which we set our hand, whether it be of mind or material. For many workers the test of success is command of the machine; that is also a test of moral sovereignty.

Nevertheless, a serious danger confronts the craftsman of the machine age; it springs directly from the situation we have just described. He is liable to lose his mental initiative. For consider how little he is allowed to contribute to the ultimate product: he has no share in the determination of the pattern; the details are worked out in the central office and conform strictly to the demands of the trade; in many cases, the pattern is not varied lest extra expense should be incurred. Furthermore, since profit is the animating motive of business, mass production must be maintained, and a change of style means a loss of efficiency in operation. In certain types of manufacture, the space allotted to the workman is fixed by scientific measurement; otherwise, as Henry Ford says, there would be waste of energy and room. This is the cardinal principle of "rationalization," now in force in representative shops. Success in management is best obtained by assigning a small piece of work to each operator; he must complete this and nothing else. Personal initiative is soon extinguished; the man is a cog in a gigantic machine. Unnecessary physical fatigue is avoided, but the ennui characteristic of monotony of service grips the very soul of the worker and perhaps breaks the temper of his mind.⁵

⁴ "Introduction to Social Ethics," p. 357.

⁵ Cf. G. A. Johnston, "The Philosophy of Industry," in *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1928.

There is one additional factor that must not be overlooked. The machine has disturbed the center of gravity of employment. Positions are less secure than under the system of craftsmanship. The reasons are manifold—overproduction of the specialty, changes in public taste or caprice, substitution of another workman at a cheaper rate or on the ground that the former man has been “worn down” by the constant grind, or, finally, a change in the management of the plant, as when two or more companies merge. The result is disastrous to the morale of industry. The worker lives under a series of fear complexes. If he be retained in the plant, he expects a reduction in pay at the next appearance of the envelope; if he be dismissed, he is filled with a bitter discontent, which attacks the whole system of economic and political institutions. This is the problem facing many earnest toilers, many communities whose existence depends on the success of the industrial system, many corporations which have not learned the new principles of coöperative progress. Fear is one of the most disintegrating of all social forces. It cannot be stilled by charity, which seeks to satisfy the immediate physical needs. The problem is not for the philanthropist but for the scientific economist. Every ill the individual suffers leaves an indelible imprint on the social consciousness, that is, upon the structure of the state. Hence, the state is in duty bound to consider the problem in the large. Temporary measures, like employers’ liability laws or the safeguarding of women and children in industry, have their value; but they do not strike at the root of the trouble, which is the misappreciation of human personality. United action on the part of the constituted authorities is the only way for remedying the social maladies incident to the substitution of the machine as the instrument of production. Private sentiment or local treatment is of no avail.⁶

But the repercussion of such a situation on the public mind takes another form, even more sinister. It threatens

⁶ W. G. FitzGerald has a valuable paper on the subject in the *Quarterly Review*, July, 1928, “Men vs. Machines in the United States.”

society with deadly uniformity of manners and customs that will eventually rob mankind of its æsthetic instincts. If the dwellings we inhabit are constructed of the same style and size of bricks; if they are furnished with the same patterns and weave of upholstery, curtains, rugs; if our tables are burdened with edibles preserved in the same manner and with the use of the same chemicals, as the office of the Secretary of Commerce recommends; then we may save time and waste in preparation, confusion in distribution, social friction in the conflict of opinion, but—the unbroken miles of grass on the prairies will yield less tedium than the mechanized feelings of the human heart. For the adoption of economic regularity must be succeeded by standardization in other fields, in accordance with the Edisonian formula that “no man shall perform a task which a machine can do as well or better.” Nor will it be long before subjective thinking as well as objective behavior will feel the same uniformizing impulse. We may confidently expect the invention of a machine (said to be already perfected) like the “integrator,” which is

a device of electrical measurements, gears, and recording tables; it is virtually a man-made “brain” which transcends human reasoning, and readily plots the answer to problems which cannot now be solved by formal mathematics. It requires from eight minutes to an hour to make computations which would take an engineer from one month to a year to work out by ordinary methods.⁷

Obviously, the next step in the standardizing of experience is to contrive a synthetic moral program which will automatically work itself out in individual conduct and in public action. We may then foresee the day when presidents will be elected without the excitements of the canvass, when congresses will make laws by a sort of “preëstablished harmony,” the calm of machine-like uniformity brooding over the nation and its institutions. This is the imperative of the machine, and this the end to be attained. Can mechanical regularity and moral responsibility dwell together? The question answers itself.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

3. Social Interactions and the Problem of the Family.

“The family is the social unit”—this is the thesis with which every orthodox discourse on the subject of the family begins. In this respect the organic law of England and America is no exception. It recognizes that nature has ordained a specific means by which the human race is to be perpetuated on the earth. Rigid instinctive tendencies were conferred upon it; the desire for propagation became co-ordinate with the desire for self-preservation. Slowly the parental habit grew into a fixed mode of reaction, organized, perhaps, by the impulse for ownership, the desire to hold what has been acquired by conquest or reproduction. Thus, wife and child are propertied possessions and are released only when overmastering force compels. This fact confirms the headship of the husband in the family, which has persisted as an integral part of the law down to our own generation. Blackstone sums up the case in these words:

By marriage husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being or legal existence of woman is suspended during marriage, or at least is incorporated into that of her husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover she performs everything.⁸

The term “social unit” has thus a double implication. It exhibits the close and compact relationship of the members of the integrated group, a kind of solidarity found in no other animal species. It also states that the larger society is not composed of dispersed individuals, as Hobbes supposed, but of a congeries of family clans, each complete in itself, which together constitute the fabric of the state. The history of Scotland and England bears witness to the political validity of the principle. In America the home appears in the records of war and peace, in the engagements of religion, in fiction, verse, and sermon, as the sheet-anchor of civil security, the palladium of our liberties. No critic is qualified to analyze the causes and forms of the social change taking place before our eyes who does not under-

⁸ “Commentaries,” Bk. II, Ch. 29.

stand the historic affiliation of the family and the state.

What is the nature of the changes now at work in the body of the family? The problem is much more complicated than those we have just discussed. They referred to the blighting of certain subsidiary impulses, such as the sentiment of equality or the desire for self-expression. But this sends its roots deep into the soil of personal affection and racial safeguarding. It does not admit of an objective analysis, as do the problems of education, economics, or statecraft; it considers first of all the motives and governing purposes which drive to action. Especially is it concerned with a functional attitude taken up by a large group of agents whose rights in the matter have been obscured by convention and perhaps by necessity. The whole question has, unfortunately, been dragged into the arena of acrimonious debate by misguided enthusiasts. The tender sentiments that have mantled the relations of men and women in the home are suddenly stripped of their privacy and exposed to examination in the forum or the press. We have no choice but to face the facts of current experience and attempt to evaluate their moral significance.

The first fact is the indifference of a considerable number of young women to the claims of the marriage relation. The attitude is new, and, while it has not yet become a social menace, it at least requires an explanation. It would be imprudent to jump to the conclusion, as some authors have done,⁹ that the whole institution, which has been the groundwork of the civilization of the West, is about to be destroyed by the fatal process of disuse. Certain efficient causes are cited—increasing education, economic opportunity, and a sense of personal independence. Colleges for women have been in operation for over half a century and authentic figures show that only fifty per cent of their graduates have accepted the burdens of the family. This is due in part, we are told, to the changed intellectual horizons; the broadening of personal interests; the revision of inherited ideas as

⁹ E. g., Miss Hinkel, in Keyserling's "Book of Marriage," p. 266.

to the meaning and value of the family; the discovery that women, as well as men, have minds, and the same right to their cultivation. Likewise, their economic conditions have undergone what is nothing short of a revolution. Many writers of the same sex frankly admit that women have hitherto sought marriage as a means of support, not because they were interested in the man or the prospect of motherhood. Now they may enter practically all the vocations which men once kept to themselves. A London journal estimates that in 1927 only fifty trades were still without women workers. The psychic effect of such a change is extraordinary. To make one's own livelihood is now esteemed a privilege, whereas a generation ago it was the symbol of disgrace. Hence, women have organized for their own protection, and the newspapers record the proceedings of associations of women bankers, women manufacturers, women educators. If the business of the mart, the office, the school, call lustily, where is there place left for husband, child, and home? Self-support is now assured without the disabilities of any frictional attachment, and happiness should ensue.

These two aspects of the change have introduced another—the sense of independence, the sharp antithesis to the dependence and the sentimental devotion of the mid-Victorian wife. It is embodied in the craving for self-expression. Self-hood requires the broad spaces of art, industry, education, and politics for its adequate unfolding. The cloistered life of the church no longer makes appeal to the energetic woman of the new day. Her solid intelligence and strong feelings need the excitements of the hustings and the turmoil of the legislative halls. The cry for moral uplift, which characterized the crusade of an earlier generation, is superseded by bold adventures into smoke-laden rooms of the party caucus and campaign committee. Moral principles are forgotten or held in abeyance while the ancient tricks of political maneuvering are carefully copied, if not improved upon. There lie the instruments for personal expression, there the fasces of intellectual and social sovereignty. If

marriage be a bar to such development, as it no doubt is, then marriage must be avoided and time given to this greatest of pursuits, the making of a self.

The changed social situation may be viewed also from women's attitude to marriage, once marriage has been agreed upon. It seems to be generally assumed that since the union is a contract, not a status, it can be terminated at will, even on a trumped-up charge. Marriage on this theory is an arrangement for the realization of certain utilitarian purposes. Primarily, for the multitude, it is a chance for the gratification of the fundamental impulse, the strongest appetite in the system. Measures are now known and practised by which nature's prescribed results may be neutralized. There is also the desire for companionship, the revolt against the loneliness of the apartment or the club, the opportunity for communication with one who commands a momentary fascination for the mind. In cases of exceptional intelligence, marriage means contact between persons of refined tastes, lofty ideals, notable achievements in the fields of literature and science, the tang of sex adding to the zest of social and intellectual intercourse. But all these motives are temporary in influence; they have none of the depth attaching to a sense of obligation which a parent feels toward his child; they are not colored by the glow of rationalized emotion that attends the exercise of pure affection. They consider only the private pleasures of the individual, not the public good of society. They deny *in toto* the validity of the historic judgment that the social structure depends for its health and continuance upon the health and moral vigor of the family unit. Divorce, it is alleged, is not a rupture of organic ties; it is the legal instrument for ending an undesirable contract.

If this be the sentiment of the new woman, it may be gravely questioned whether as yet we are in a position to study the basic principles governing the relations of the sexes in the light of the new increment of knowledge and self-assurance recently acquired by the women of the land. But one thing may be confidently affirmed, that indiscrimi-

nate divorce, as it now exists, is not a definitive solution of the problem; it is merely a confession that marriage as a social institution has not been properly appraised and that its inherent duties have been flagrantly violated. Certainly the virtue of self-denial, which in the past has been universally accepted as the corner stone of marital success, is entirely excluded from the desirable qualities which the modern woman seeks to acquire. We cannot refrain from citing again the strange tenor of the Hedonistic paradox, which, accoutered in other words, has the force of an indiscernible law: "He that would save his life shall lose it." Nor can any human being, whether man or woman, plead exemption from its categorical terms.

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CHAPTER VII

MORAL REHABILITATION

It is a curious fact in the history of thought that religion and ethics have taken different attitudes toward the problem of moral evil. Religion tends to paint it in its most repugnant traits. It begins with "man's first disobedience," which brought "death to the world and all our woe." It formulates the creed that sin has become indigenous to human nature and can be communicated from one generation to another, thus imposing a heavy handicap upon the fortunes of every new-born member of the race. It also assumes that the environment in which we are forced to live is none too favorable to the formation of virtuous habits. The Eastern cults have even envisaged the presence of antithetical powers, Ormuzd and Ahriman, perpetually at war in a universe which each claims for its own. It is true that there is a certain hereditary continuity in physical and even mental disabilities, but medical science, at present, holds that disease as a diagnostic malady does not, so far as known, pass from father to son; but the uncoördinating nerves and tissues of the body feel the taint of heredity. The upshot of the argument is that release from error comes, not through human effort, but by some extra-natural agency. If man has broken a universal law, he cannot be expected by his own wisdom to repair it.

The attitude of ethics is altogether different. It places only restricted emphasis on the facts of disheveled character, and then attempts to expound the functions of the ideal life and the methods of discharging them. It lays down the postulate that the nature of the child is neither moral nor immoral, neither vicious nor virtuous; it is without any moral qualities whatsoever. Mind is a bundle of aptitudes

which experience and conditions will develop in one direction or the other. The factors that enter into moral habits have been discussed at length. The problem now before us considers the modes by which restoration may be obtained when such habits have been wrongly formed. That they will be wrongly molded ethics takes for granted. Because its teachers have not dwelt so persistently upon their myriad and tangled forms as religious preceptors have, we are not justified in thinking that the seriousness of the problem is not understood. A careful reading of representative authors will dispel that illusion. Plato does not restrain his words in describing the mental confusion of the bad man: "a meddlesomeness and interference, and rising up of a part of the soul against the whole soul, an assertion of unlawful authority . . . the disturbance and mistake of these elements is injustice and intemperance and cowardice and ignorance, and, in general, vice."¹ This is the judgment of a critical observer, without prepossession or bias, who has no hesitation in setting forth the facts as he sees them. Bishop Butler is no less explicit. He begins his inquiry with a predisposition in favor of the natural goodness of the human heart. The primary edicts of conscience or "right reason" embrace both benevolent regard and the principles of self-love, as we have already shown. Hence, men can erect a series of virtuous habits much as the civil state organizes individuals and communities into an harmonious whole. The process, however, is shadowed by the inclination to let temporary pleasures dictate the course of action, with grave results to the habituated form of behavior called character. These two examples are enough to exhibit the causes of moral decadence, while they prove that scientific ethics is not averse to declaring the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

1. Nature of Moral Delinquency.

What, then, does moral delinquency imply? It may be useful to compare its terms with the usages of criminal

¹ "Republic," Bk. IV, p. 444.

law. Custom has decreed a twofold division of offenses or violations of the prescribed civil duties. The first are called *mala in se* and are held to be wrongful in themselves, the second are designated as *mala quia prohibita* and are direct transgressions of official statutes. The one class embraces all actions that are repugnant to the moral sense of the given community; the other refers to any types of behavior that interfere with the general comfort of the body politic or threaten its integrity. History will tell how widely the offenses classified under the first have varied in the course of the centuries. It may be supposed, for example, that the crime of bigamy, now recognized as actionable by almost every civilized government, was once a *malum prohibitum*, much as the Eighteenth Amendment is with us today. In view of the rapidity and frequency with which divorces are obtained, it may be questioned whether the spirit of the one law is better observed than the intent of the other. What is clear is that, no matter what the source of authority, whether prevailing sentiment or legislative decision, both offenses depend on the elementary meaning of the term, and this implies a negation of the specific obligations imposed on all citizens of the state. It follows that the provisions of laws covering the commission of crimes are prohibitory in form and content. They assume that the contrary of what is forbidden is *eo ipso* allowed. Thus, a statute is careful to define the nature of the murderer's act, citing such exceptions (for example, self-defense) as make the principles of the law nugatory and without application.

Are we warranted in distinguishing between two corresponding sorts of moral obliquity, one that is rooted in the definition of the contradicted virtue, the other that issues from the peculiar conditions of the act itself? Values, we said, represent either the intrinsic qualities without which we cannot be responsible and sovereign moral agents, or those objective relations which are necessary to intercourse with our fellow men. At times it may appear quite beyond our powers to render the distinction effective; for moral

character means nothing except when developed under the drill of social experience. Thus, the honor of the individual (as father, son, brother) may be inextricably bound up with the honor of his family. But, for analytical purposes, the distinction has value and worth. We have agreed that the basic qualities of the good man are veracity, honesty, and reverence, and we should have no trouble in assenting to Hocking's epigram that "sin has the character of untruth because of the unspoken assertions or meanings of the act."² That is to say, the act purports to embody the complete behavior of the man, while in fact it gives only a partial or distorted view of it. For instance, we betray the confidence of a friend, treating him in reality as an enemy, though still professing loyalty to his interests. Betrayal is a deliberate falsification of the facts. But the case goes deeper than this; it impinges on the elementary rights of man, which include protection to his name and fame. These are underlying values in the system of moral excellences. Hence, every discriminating civil state gives legal sanction to the claims of personality; it makes libel and scandal actionable offenses. It requires that the defamatory charge be exact and explicit and that its effects on the victim be determinable damages in goods or character (reputation). If the accusation carry with it the implication of an "indictable crime involving moral turpitude or liability to infamous punishment," the presumption of guilt on the part of the accuser is said to be sufficient.³ Such a charge, when unsupported by facts, is doubly reprehensible, since it destroys the public respect which every man may properly claim as his own, and it induces its maker to accept a lie when the evidence is merely circumstantial. Even though the offense never reaches the courts of law, it may and should be haled before the tribunal of public opinion and there stigmatized as meriting the severest condemnation.

² "Human Nature and Its Remaking," Ch. 18.

³ F. M. Burdick, in *Johnson's Dictionary*, art., "Libel and Scandal."

It is through acts of this sort that the temper of the "unprincipled" man is disclosed.⁴

The absence of principle assumes a peculiarly obnoxious form when men are plotting against the health of society by manufacturing and selling adulterated food products or placing on the market tainted or decayed meats, the actual condition of which has been disguised by certain preparative devices. One can still remember the indignant protests that arose from an outraged public in 1898 when certain great packing companies sold to the government large consignments of spoiled meat ("embalmed beef") for use in the American army during the Spanish War. The obliquity seems more heinous when the lives of the country's defenders are put in jeopardy, not by the enemy's guns, but by the rapacious greed of its own citizens. The indignation thus excited grew in volume and widened in scope until, in 1906, Congress passed an act to attempt to thwart the nefarious practices of unprincipled manufacturers. Since the great body of the people use articles of food not produced on their own premises, such a statute has had a salutary effect upon market manipulators, both producer and distributor. The law provides that a substance which "contains any added poisonous or other added deleterious ingredient which may render such article injurious to health" is to be regarded as *adulterated*.⁵ Numerous State legislatures have incorporated the same principle in their own laws, and thus, by concerted action, the machinations of designing men have been made void. It is almost inconceivable that human wills can prostitute the instrumental values of life, the economic needs of society, to such malign ends. The life, health, and happiness of multitudes of dependent persons, including children, invalids, and mental delinquents, suffer seriously through the commercial cupidity of gigantic corporate interests. In this case, at least, the arm of unrighteous dealing has overreached itself, and

⁴ Plato's "Republic," 443 E.

⁵ Cf. Sherman, "Food Products," p. 583, and comment on pp. 40-53.

the social conscience has embodied its prescriptions in valuable legislative enactments.

2. Denial of Significance of Moral Evil as a Method of Rehabilitation.

A large body of kindred facts now lies open to the scrutiny of sincere inquirers. The facts announce that a norm of moral conduct has been adopted, but that many men have failed to meet its terms. This norm is crystallized in the two sets of values, intrinsic and contributory, which form the ordinary channels of virtuous action. If these values have been wrongly interpreted, either through lack of attention or absorption in adventitious pursuits or through sheer egotism, some way must be found for rehabilitating the *de-moralized* soul. It is known to science that nature can effect regeneration in her broken organs, cells, and tissues. Thus, in some organic species, the eye may be restored in structure and function by drawing regenerative substance from the adjacent parts. One of the wonders of surgery during the World War was the total rebuilding of a shattered face. The restitution of the powers of the mind is no less effective. It is on record that a promising young German musician, who lost his right arm in battle, resolved, when invalided home, not to yield the ambition of a lifetime as a hostage to fortune but to perfect himself in the use of the remaining hand, so that his genius in music might have its due expression. On a scale of great magnificence, the Government of the United States in 1919 set about the personal and objective rehabilitation of its wounded soldiers. It was to be expected that their physical disabilities should receive the best attention. But how could war-torn minds, still trembling with the horrors of shell-shock, be so guided and stimulated as to prepare them for a career in the new world? Institutions and private citizens who shared in the great undertaking deserve the thanks of the Government and the public for their self-sacrificing efforts.

These are the facts that science and history contribute

can moral science produce the same results? The problem, then, is this: How can wrong-moded behavior be converted into habitual forms of action which properly express the two classes of moral value?

The first method was suggested by the quixotic mind of Nietzsche: Deny the validity of current appraisals of character; demand the transvaluation of all values; determine what the fundamental meaning of goodness should be; face the new meaning without trepidation. The word "good" is everywhere in affinity with the concept of aristocracy, and its opposite with the idea of the plebs. Good, therefore, cannot be a property of the mass; it belongs to the few. Religion demands that virtue should be equality—which is impossible. English Hedonism, built on psychological laws, distinguishes between egoism and altruism—terms that cannot find place in the same canons of conduct. Both religion and ethics have therefore affirmed and embellished the concept of the herd-instinct, the fear of departure from conventional practice, deference to the body of governing opinion, which, Viscount Bryce admits, lies at the root of democratic administration.⁶ To Nietzsche, however, deference is another name for cowardice, and has been used by the priestly class to rivet the chains of submission upon unreflective minds. They are taught to obey the managerial group, which in no way represents the sovereign powers of natural mastery.

Human history would be too fatuous for anything were it not for the cleverness imported into it by the weak. Take at once the most important instance. All the world's efforts against the "aristocrats," the "mighty," the "masters," the "holders of power," are negligible by comparison with what has been accomplished against those classes by the Jews—the Jews, that priestly nation which eventually realized that the one method of effecting satisfaction on its enemies and tyrants was means of a radical transvaluation of values, which was at the same time an act of the cleverest revenge.⁷

⁶ "Studies in History and Jurisprudence," Ch. 9.

⁷ "Genealogy of Morals," p. 29, trans. by Oscar Levy.

The distinction between "weakness made strong" and nature's inherent strength is now clear. Morality, as taught by religion and enforced by the state, is the code of slaves; it is bald conformity—not the conduct of independent minds, not the assertion of aristocratic feelings. It was initiated by a revolt against the "triumphant affirmations" of natural morality, and it survives merely because it engenders greater prudence and compromise and because it has a sustained memory for injuries. The conquering soul, like Mirabeau, forgets insults; like the audacious Athens of Pericles, it "forces a way over land and sea, rearing everywhere imperishable memorials of itself for good or for evil." In reality, however, the distinction between moral qualities is purely formal, purely conventional. The tools of modern civilization created by it—war, diplomacy, scientific competition—are a disgrace to human nature; they will soon be relegated to an unsainted past. In the long run, truth is the sublimation of the self in the social state. There moral values are eliminated; we shall be "beyond good and evil."

Is the Nietzschean program a complete solution to the problem of restoration? Let us get a glimpse of the way it is applied in modern society. It is known that important oil deposits in a southern state have been retained by the Federal Government as reserve supplies for the exclusive use of the United States Navy and that authority over the control of the output is vested in the hands of the Secretary of that department. It is also known that certain industrial interests, eager to profit by the huge potential sales, secured an order signed by the Secretary and countersigned by the President, authorizing the transfer of such control to the Department of the Interior. It is further on record that the Secretary of the Interior surrendered the valuable concessions on lease to the interests in question for a private consideration of over a hundred thousand dollars, paid in Government bonds and delivered in person to the consignee. The entire transaction was conducted with the utmost secrecy, and brought to light only by chance nearly three

years later. Whereupon, by the irresistible demands of public sentiment, the matter was finally taken to court, the Supreme Court at Washington administering a stinging rebuke to the erstwhile Secretary of the Interior, stigmatizing him as a "faithless public servant."

But how could the men who profited most largely be reached? Some had already escaped to Europe and could not be apprehended. The chief offenders began to fight the case in court, but the Government could get no judgment against them. In one instance, the jury was barefacedly tampered with and had to be discharged; in another, only a partial indictment could be entered and no verdict obtained. In the meantime, political authorities zealously circulated the opinion that guilt was personal, although no judicial cognizance was taken until it was forced, and although the campaign committee received bonds of an allied oil company to cover its deficits—all of which facts are a part of the record. Furthermore, the press of the country shunted news of the case slowly but surely from the front page, on the plea that a continued discussion injured the business interests of the nation. Hence, if we are to choose between moral integrity and commercial success, we must always decide in favor of the latter, in accordance with the fundamental principles of the Nietzschean system that the will of the group is law. Can rehabilitation of individual or community be achieved under these conditions? Can the "aristocratic" powers of industry transvalue the values of moral conduct? Honesty is not an abstraction or the instinctive fiction of the "herd;" it is the solid ground of moral character; if men decline to obey its terms, moral regeneration is impossible.

3. Adoption of Objective Symbols of Rehabilitation.

If a cure cannot be effected by denying the reality of disease, perhaps we can exorcise its influence by applying some appropriate symbol. Curious customs attend the more difficult situations of human experience among primitive

peoples—childbirth, sickness, war, death. Each has its own peculiar ritual intended to afford relief to fatigued or fearful spirits. The assumption is that objective action, performed with direct reference to the event, will either eliminate danger or prepare the mind to accept its fate. Euripides celebrated in his "Bacchantes" the release from ceremonial impurities by initiation into the Orphic mysteries:

Robed in white I have borne me clean
From man's vile birth and confined clay,
And exiled from my life away
Touch of all meat where Life hath been.⁸

The principle here observed is that we can match the inner change by the outer token, or, more drastically still, that the outer token can guarantee the possession of the inner change. There is a magic communion between the material substance and the fine exertions of soul. If a man will but commit his destiny into the keeping of a well-constructed symbolism, his intrinsic character is assured. In accordance with this theory, religion has defined its sacraments as "the outward and visible signs of an inward grace." Unfortunately, worshipers have been only too ready to convert them into a kind of protecting cloak, concealing beneath beautiful symbols the hideous forms of spiritual decay. Literal sacramentalism is a hollow mockery; it produces the Satan of Milton or the Mephistopheles of Goethe's "Faust."

Can morality obtain what religion fails to make its own? We may allow, for the sake of argument, that the average man is conscious of his faults and seriously desires to reorganize his career. And, in general, this is not taking too much for granted. He is accustomed to note the effective disguises under which social leaders conduct their successful enterprises. Thus, in the matter of liquor consumption, he observes the sudden abstemiousness that overtakes the

⁸ Quoted by J. E. Harrison, in "Prolegomena to Greek Religion," p. 507.

candidate for public office in these days of high Prohibition and is impressed with the effects on current opinion. If virtue is to be judged solely by its results—for example, in establishing order, allaying party friction, soothing the alarms of pious souls—then certainly the assumption of a stern moral attitude is not only good policy but bounden duty. Success seems to lie in procuring a suitable formula, which can both satisfy the sensibilities of one's constituents and not contradict too sharply the actual behavior of the candidate. At all events, victory is a logical vindication of the character of the actor, and the symbolism adopted is justified.

Let us apply the method to moral rehabilitation, choosing one symbolic form. It is a common article of belief that material goods go hand in hand with virtue. Religious creeds have validated the belief. Property belongs of right to the man of established character, even though the "wicked" may sometimes get their place in the sun—for a moment. Proponents of the theory point to the blistering sacrifices exacted, the herculean labors that take hold of the iron in the blood. Cecil Rhodes could not have come to his imperial estate if endowed with dubious intellect or ungovernable passions. The iron masters of France and Germany are trained in the qualities of pertinacity and self-control. We may detect serious and injurious defects in their dealings with employees, patrons, and governments, but in the main they represent the sturdy citizenship of the country, the backbone of order, the guaranty of economic progress. Property and character, says the conservative, go together. Is the converse of this proposition true? If property implies character, does character also imply property? Are there not numerous citizens, men of unblemished virtue, men of distinct achievement, who own no stocks or bonds, are directors of no important corporations, are never asked for advice in promoting great financial enterprises? Still, in the opinion of the public, such men are at a disadvantage. It is assumed that some deficiency deterred them from obtaining places of influence; they cannot be blamed for social in-

feriority, but at the same time they cannot expect the same consideration that is paid to the recognizedly successful man. Dives has patrons where Lazarus has none.

May we, then, commend this symbolism to the citizen who desires to erase an ancient scar, or who, just starting out on life, desires to be in a position to cover up any moral delinquencies that may occur? The answer to the program's claims lies here: we refuse to equate two different types of value without any qualifying coefficients. Goods of character and goods of matter have no commensurable qualities. It has been argued that the sterling virtues of mind and heart have made the nations of northern Europe the logical depositaries of nature's wealth. But the withering satire of Buckle and Carlyle has exposed the fallacy of the formula. For with the accumulation of capital and with the introduction of the industrial system have come sordid greed, cruel exploitation of the weak, dishonest weights, rupture of friendships, the mockery of religion, and the degradation of art. Gorgeous palaces and Louis XIV furnishings cannot change the peasant into the prince. To revert to the former figure, property is not a sacrament capable of conferring moral integrity upon a dishevelled soul.

4. Rational Method of Rehabilitation.

It stands to reason that a solution of the problem before us cannot be made by flatly denying the reality of moral evil or by adopting a formula to cover its terms. Both methods are illusory; they do not touch the root of the trouble. Hocking proposes to determine "what part of human nature can be saved" by the instruments of social discipline. He assumes that society can never save the whole man; it can only "conserve as much of a man as can, at any time, find a valuation; it saves as much as it knows how to use or esteem."⁹ But is it true that certain elements

⁹ "Human Nature and Its Remaking," Ch. 33.

of manhood necessarily disappear under the stress of the disciplinary process? We may believe that deceit and exaggeration and kindred excrescences will be sloughed off; but they are not native to man's character; they are misuses of his original tendencies. Hence, the analogy is not exact; we do not need to eliminate "waste;" we need to reorganize the entire structure. A thorough rehabilitation is the aim of moral discipline, and this can be attained only by understanding the two sorts of values which express the fundamental desires.

(a) The first requisite is the recovery of the temper of self-respect. This is universally admitted to be the prime essential of citizenship in the civil state. It has long been the custom in England and other European states to issue letters patent restoring to certain persons the privileges which have been withdrawn for political or legal reasons, such, for example, as are embodied in bills of attainder. The process is called "rehabilitation," and represents a return to a position of independence within the constituted areas of civil order. The most noted case in the memory of the present generation is the so-called *Dreyfus Affaire*. Alfred Dreyfus, a captain in the French army, was accused of selling military secrets to a neighboring and potentially hostile government. Because of his Semitic connections, the feeling ran strong against him, although he was supported by men of great distinction, among them Zola and Anatole France. On the fourth of January, 1895, he was publicly degraded, his garments stripped from his body, his sword broken, and he himself sentenced to Devil's Island, the place of detention of incorrigible convicts. Four years later, the case was reopened and the verdict reaffirmed "with extenuations." By this time, however, the nation's judgment had undergone a radical change, owing in part to the extraordinary pressure of opinion from foreign countries. The next act in the drama was his pardon by President Loubet, and the drama closed with his official rehabilitation in 1906. No one but Dreyfus himself could appreciate the terrors through which he passed, and none but he, and

others like him, can tell what it means to regain his rightful place as a citizen of the state and an untainted officer in its army.

The comparison is not complete, but it is suggestive. Disregarding the coercive elements in the situation, we may fix attention on the state of mind superinduced by a successful recovery of one's moral balance. There is first a sense of unity, a solidarity of interests and aims, never possible to the votary of passion. A demoralized army means one with its morale broken, its submission to discipline annulled, its trust in its leaders gone—the definition of a mob! The victorious army is alert, united, instant for action, stout of heart, and hard to beat. The thoroughly moralized man makes his decisions according to an established code, “with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right.”¹⁰ There is, secondly, the feeling of sovereignty, masterhood, control. Desire is no longer a wayward appetite; it is an end which we can consciously direct. The system of desires presents the duties deliberately adopted as our own. Thus, truth-telling is not a hardship or a bore; it is the moral man in discharge of his inherent powers, it is reflective genius embodied in critical action. There is, finally, a new respect for the dignity of personality. It is certain that a citizen who has been reinvested with the right of participation in the activities and decisions of the civil society will obtain a more penetrating knowledge of his status than he had before. It is also certain that a fully moralized person will have an appreciation of his private worth which would mock and spurn him so long as he was a prey to unregulated appetites. In one of his illuminating essays, Walter Pater writes that the Renaissance was the rehabilitation of the human spirit. It closed and sealed the insensitive chapter of medieval oblivion and opened the world's eyes upon the beauties of nature and the superb creations of classic art. A replenished manhood, a maturity of æsthetic delight, succeeded

¹⁰ Lincoln, “Second Inaugural.”

men's struggles with the crushing weight of a dead theology, the tyrannic sway of a corrupt hierarchy, and the attempt to convert moral behavior into the inept regularity of monastic life. The struggle ends with the same convincing victory for the individual contestant also. Dignity is man's right, and nothing should stand in the way of its acquisition.

(b) The second requisite is a true valuation of the secondary ends of experience. These ends deal with objective relations, the natural associations with our fellow men. Moral rehabilitation is cramped and impotent if it cannot obtain a suitable social station. One of the tragic elements in the *dénouement* of the Dreyfus case was the practical elimination of his name from all public notice. Multitudes of serious-minded men prefer to pass through the stages of recovery in silence and alone. They argue that a complex problem like this needs time and meditation, unbroken by the clamor of the street or the prying of their neighbors. It is written that the Buddha inaugurated his divine renunciation by bidding his royal associates farewell and seeking his tryst in the desert. But the general principle is fallacious. Character must be consolidated in the midst of daily toil. This does not imply that a man should blurt out his disappointments or his elations in the hearing of the crowd. Much depends on personal temperament and racial behavior. The objective moods of the Greeks are utterly alien to the modern mind; the modern auditor does not sob out his *katharsis* in the open theater.

Still, moral achievements of any kind or degree can never be private experiences alone, for two reasons. First, the agent has a natural right to proclaim his new status to the world. If he fails to do it by deliberate word, he does it through the medium of observable behavior. A truth of the highest significance is imbedded in the ancient maxim, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Conduct is social and cannot be concealed. The family, the street, the school, the church, the friendly circle, the arena of political contentions, are obligatory centers of intercourse. In this day of

annihilated distance, the community is immeasurably enlarged, and the interest of men in one another is bound to be vastly enhanced. It is futile, then, to confine the endeavors after a moral character to one's own private chambers; such a course will not only interfere with the true understanding of a man's social duties, but may subject him ultimately to undeserved criticism and misapprehension.

Furthermore, the public has its own rights in the case, especially the right to say what sort of a character men may erect, as well as the right to supplement individual effort by timely social encouragement. No one will deny that the sensitive conscience of western nations insists on the public requital of injuries imposed by public authority. The temper of the Briton is impassive, but when aroused it never ceases action until wrongs have been redressed. Two typical cases call for judgment. The conviction of a citizen of a felonious charge, followed by years of imprisonment, is at length declared to be baseless. Parliament cannot return too him the vanished years nor retrieve his mental tortures by official apologies. It will register its regrets by legislative resolution, but it will also award him a largess of handsome proportions and publicly proclaim his innocence. A distinguished publicist in company with an attractive young woman is arrested in Hyde Park by an officious guard and held in custody on a charge of uncertain meaning, depending for its warrant on an ambiguous statute. The injury to his repute and profession is serious; the treatment of his companion ignominious. The British public is outraged and demands severe punishment for the offending official and explicit apologies to the defendants. Society is ready at all normal times to redress the wrongs of the injured. It is likewise ready to bespeak good will and aid to him who cautiously and wisely seeks to regain his moral standing in a still unhealthy world. Cynics may question the honesty and validity of his vows; sentimentalists may smooth his path by devices of uncertain value. But the will of the group is firm and considerate. Rehabilitation is part of the general

policy of communal welfare; by way of the redemption of its personal units is the state itself redeemed.

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CHAPTER VIII

MORAL PROGRESS

The change of front which we have just recorded is experienced by an individual agent or a coterie of associated agents. It requires a set of conditions in which moral maxims exercise a fairly wide and effective control. It presupposes the acceptance of a code of rules already embodied in organic law and supported by acknowledged sanctions. The standard of rehabilitated character may in some details rise higher than the moral levels of its environs, as in the case of Epictetus, the Stoic sage, who, in an age of great brutality and social chaos, could make the principles of philosophic brotherhood reëcho in the throne-room of the palace. But the standard is to be compared with the canons of conduct currently followed by the leaders of the group, since these are the criteria of value. There is, to be sure, a time-element in the change which has taken place in the convictions and behavior of the subject; but the change must mean something more than the transition from one set of responses or sentiments to another—that would be merely a series of data to be studied in the psychological laboratory. The private judgment becomes strictly moral only when related to the established behavior of the group. The comparison is therefore in the present.

The problem of moral progress considers a change of a quite different sort. It assumes, for one thing, that a perceptible interval of time elapses between the two termini of the transaction, the custom as it was once approved, and the revised form in which we now know it. Thus, the institution of slavery, whose thongs had sunk deep into the body of Epictetus, has ceased completely to exist as a legal prac-

tice in the civilized world. This fact is named, and rightly, as objective evidence of the possibility of progress in human conditions. Two divergent types of psychical reaction are demanded for the two antithetical situations. The termini—slavery and civil freedom—have no common ground; they represent points of view which cannot be held by the same person at the same time. The formula of Lincoln, “a nation cannot survive half slave, half free,” is not the phrase of an adroit politician, but the statement of a profound moral truth. When, then, society passes from one state to another, we should endeavor to determine the reasons for the change. This discussion will require a comparison of the moral valuations in the two stages of thought and a thorough scrutiny of the intellectual and moral attitudes which provoked a desire for the change.

It is this problem which we propose to study in the present chapter, and we begin with an attempt to define the field of progressive action.

1. Progress Defined by the Method of Elimination.

(a) It is the habit of some writers to divide human history into three stages, the instinctive, the customary, and the reflective; at the same time, they admit that the first stage is not “moral conduct” in any recognizable sense, while the second is merely “morality in the making.”¹ We are therefore, in our study of progress in evolution, restricted to the third stage as the authentic seat of moral values. To this era, the title of civilization has been attached on the ground that it is here that men began to esteem their associations as those of *cives* and not simply *socii*, that is, as controlled by forces other than hunger or sex or desire for shelter on the one hand, or subordination to the arbitrary decree of the chieftain or to the inviolable tabu of the tribe on the other. These, one and all, presuppose a native and yielding submission of the individual to his “fate,” a state

¹ Dewey and Tufts, “Ethics,” p. 9.

of mind which persists well into the reflective ages of experience and has not yet been dispossessed of its constraints. We have already determined the psychological factors involved and need only note at the moment that neither the formation of habits nor the consolidation of emotional attitudes nor the sharpening of the powers of judgment represents the meaning of progress as we intend to define it. These are elements in the evolution of consciousness prepared for and paralleled by the main lines of biological evolution. They proceed by the same laws (for example, learning) as those which guide the differentiation of functions in any organic species below the level of man.

“This method of learning,” says Hobhouse, “retains many of the features of a mechanical process, and when an animal can learn so much and no more we are to regard its behavior rather as determined by the results of its past experience operating upon its brain structures than by an intelligent apprehension of the future experiences which its action will secure for it.”²

Even properties that seem distinctively human, such as the recognition of familiar objects, have been anticipated in the earlier forms of life. Hence, there is every reason to hold that man's functional habits develop by natural laws and not by the conscious initiation of changes through the medium of a reflective mind.

Nor is the process subject to the election of will when ordinances, institutions, and group concepts are formed. These arise in the application of causal forces, all of which have their root in the tendency to seek the preservation of the individual and the species. Thus, the blood feud is indigenous to the primitive community. It originates in accidental or purposed homicide, or other heinous offense, which can receive adequate compensation only in the death or enslavement of a member of the offending tribe. “Purpose” here means following the bent of mind without deliberate analysis. Parleys or peace proposals arise largely through the

²“Morals in Evolution,” Pt. I, Ch. 1.

method of trial and error; *sometimes* such negotiations succeed. The incentive lies in the coherence of the family group, and the incentive can be checkmated only by such counter-restraints as are imposed by the authority of the chief. Similar methods are pursued in dealing with other significant situations, such as the position of women, the possession of private property, the organizations within the clan, and the relations with neighboring tribes. In no case is action strictly premeditated. The plot of ground is seized, the woman is captured in war, men doing one kind of work band together for protection. Reason and deliberation play no part in the drama; it is a "mechanical process" no less effective than the functioning of an elementary impulse, which indeed it is. The body of customs develops in support of the interests of the group precisely as the aggregates of chemical substance tend to cohere in an organic mold called plant or animal.

Progress is essentially different from evolution; it is "not a change that acts by automatic law or the inherent tendency of things."³ Progress requires the subtle force of intellect for the critical examination of *suspected* customs which, some men insist, must be either wholly displaced or materially modified. Thus, the blood feud has largely disappeared from social procedure, although the basic emotions that prompted it have lost none of their native virility. Settlement of difficulties is now reposed in the hands of a central authority with power to punish or reward, to restrain or approve. It is felt that the verdicts of nature are weighted with the mere physical dominance of the victor; they should be analyzed by the tests of abstract justice. Progress hangs on the ability of the group to set up and operate a code of laws which shall apply to all transactions within the sphere of government, whether between individual citizens or with adjacent communities. Reflection has superseded mere impulse or imitation; judg-

³ *Ibid.*, Pt. II, Ch. 8.

ment directed by a considering mind is responsible for every forward step.

(b) A sententious definition of progress was framed by Proudhon, the social economist. "Progress," he said, "in the purest, least empirical meaning of the word is the movement of ideas, a process; an inward movement, spontaneous, essential, uncoercible, and indestructible, which is to mind what weight is to matter." The definition admits of a variety of interpretations. Some thinkers have assumed that the achievements of art, philosophy, and science are the true measures of social advancement, that progress will lie in mental versatility and greatness. Hence, any people that can boast of the imagination of a Dante, the analytical skill of a Shakespeare, the comprehensive genius of a Montaigne, may be said to have won a place of distinction among their associates. The difficulty with the argument is twofold. First, it demands a standard of judgment by means of which earlier productions may be compared point for point with the works of modern creators. Such a standard eludes our grasp. For how shall we compare the subtle argument in the "Prometheus Bound" with the developed plot of "King Lear"? Or how shall we succeed in finding common materials in the objective culture which Æschylus reflected in his dramas and the more intimate types of human relations which Shakespeare incorporated in his imposing characters? The attitude to nature and moral motive is different in the two cases; there is no salient correspondence between them, and it is futile to look for any. Furthermore, superlative works of genius represent but a small fraction of a people's intellectual endeavors; they take the tide at its flood, not in its flow or its ebb. It is conceivable that the moral structure of a nation might be completely undermined by the social vices of the leaders, as actually happened in the Italy of Machiavelli; and still the finest sort of æsthetic inspiration may be pressing to the light—Petrarch, Leonardo da Vinci, and a host of others. What is the criterion of value? What is the "pure idea of progress," which stands to mind as specific gravity to

body? Obviously the quest for progress on the higher registers is doomed to disappointment.

Perhaps we may find the desired formula in more modest surroundings. Léon Laffitte, a keen observer of modern life, proposes another type of intellectual endeavor as the valid instrument of progress, namely, economy of effort.⁴ His standard of judgment is not open to the objections just mentioned. For, except in their design and construction, tools that insure the economy of labor become the property of the entire public, either in their technical use or in the enjoyment of the articles produced by them. Illustrations of this essential economy abound on every hand. One operator can now perform the labor of a dozen earlier workmen, through the concentrated movements of the machine. In accomplishing a given task, an immense amount of time can be saved through efficient methods devised by Taylor and other experts. Materials of real value no longer go to waste. Inferior grades of coal, even lignite, can by scientific treatment be converted into liquid fuel, an effective and economical substitute for orthodox anthracite. Agriculture produces a larger yield to the acre by scientific methods in fertilizing the soil, ameliorating blight, and harvesting crops, besides bringing under cultivation vast tracts of lands that have hitherto resisted the molding hand of man. Medicine has shown us how to prevent disease, diminish pain, safeguard the public health. Progress means economy of suffering. Finally, transportation has been completely revolutionized within our lifetime—steam, electricity, the motor car, the airplane. The economy of time is progress; a maximum of speed and a minimum of time—these are the arbiters of the new age. If progress is “spontaneous movement,” an unstayed and irresistible progress, then its true symbol is the function of motion which we name Time. Time saved means reduplication of effort, enlargement of mental horizons, an apparent impulse to moral achievement.

May we accept the estimate of the theory at its face

⁴ In *Mercure de France*, March 1, 1921, p. 393.

value? No doubt, from the standpoint of social economics, the gains recited are real and enticing. Industry, commerce, finance, have profited copiously by the formulas of efficient regulation. Education has improved its external equipment and speeded up its methods for communicating knowledge. Government has learned—fitfully—the intrinsic merits of exact analysis. Even religion has been taught the worth of methodicity in handling its fiscal or eleemosynary funds. This is the lucent side of the picture. There is a darker side, appallingly dark—broken bodies, lacerated nerves, deranged minds, disappointed hopes, shattered homes, estranged lovers, fruitless quests for pleasure, temperamental *ennui* which, as Schopenhauer says, is more devastating than death, luxury that steepes the soul in the fumes of moral decadence, prosperity that turns the bright souls of youth away from æsthetic joys to the greed of marketplace and shop. These are Mephistophelian penalties which modern man is paying for his adoption of the new symbol of progress. It reverses the maxim of the ancients that “time was made for slaves;” the freeman seeks eternity. Time, when saved in the manner described, is the recruiting-ground for further excesses of the same sort. In short, the sustained emphasis on a subsidiary element in the mental behavior serves ultimately to relax the moral tension of the nation. Progress, as thus conceived, is tenuous and etiolate; it lacks a compelling force. It may embody some of the implications of Spencer’s classic definition of life—passage from a homogeneous state to one of increasing heterogeneity—but it fails to register the fact which even Spencer has to admit, namely, the need of an insistent moral sense, the drive of moral obligation.

2. Possibility of Progress Denied by Some Philosophers.

We have now distinguished the two elements that human nature must possess if it is to make a substantial change in behavior according to the laws of value. But before we inquire how the concept of progress may become effective

in society, we must first ask whether it is an attainable end. If not, what arguments may be alleged against it?

(a) The first thinker we shall consider—Schopenhauer—has given to his theory the familiar name of Pessimism. It was conceived as an answer to Leibniz' view that the world is the "best possible," chosen from an infinite number of presented ideals. Evil is admitted to be a necessary ingredient of the universe, but cannot be regarded as incurably bad; it "sometimes brings about the good." To this opinion, Schopenhauer retorts that we actually live in the "worst possible world;" if it were a little worse, it could not maintain itself at all.⁵ In face of such a condition, no theory of progress is admissible. But does such a condition exist? His answer is emphatically in the affirmative. His main proof takes two directions. First (i), happiness, which is said to be the goal of all endeavor, belongs unequivocally to the individual. But the individual is not a continuing factor; it has only a momentary existence and then disappears. Reality is in the species, not in the individual body. Hence, the "fear of death" is unwarranted. The essence of individuality is striving, and striving cannot be experienced without pain.⁶ Pain is positive; pleasure is merely the surcease of pain. This is seen in the operation of any appetite, which is everywhere hindered, blocked, thwarted; and each inhibition of it is suffering. Pain is somewhat submerged in the lower organisms; it rises to fury and even impressive grandeur in the sustained feelings of man. With the refining of the instruments of civilization, the increment of pain becomes greater, as when a skilled musician passes through excruciating agonies in the presence of disharmony. The "sting of remorse" is the reaction incurred by men who do injury to their neighbors. Since the will is stunted on every hand, it seems clear that no equilibrium can be reached except by the complete extinction of the individual. This deduction contradicts the first canon of progress, that re-

⁵ "The World as Will and Idea," trans. by Haldane and Kemp, Vol. III, p. 395.

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 291.

flection comes through the medium of a developed personality.

The proof of Pessimism lies also (ii) in the nature of the universe itself. The evidence of evil is cumulative. Attentive spectators have set down their deliberate opinion that death is a "consummation devoutly to be wished." The evidence begins with inorganic nature; the earthquakes of Lisbon and Haiti, the destruction of Pompeii, the potential combination of chemicals that would destroy millions of men, as the world knows only too well since 1914. Transferring his investigation to human history, he cites the mass of individual and social damage—tyranny, war, murder, rape, mutilation, wrongs that only a distorted fancy could conceive and only a malevolent mind could execute. Society should not be described as the seat of affection; it is rather the caldron of jealousy, dissension, and impurity. Thinking, which is said to be the implement of progress, turns out to be the instrument of theft, deceit, and reprisal. Indeed, the conditions of existence are met only when we use the weapons of the aggressor; "the worst enemy of man is man," *homo homini lupus*.⁷ The structure of the world, including the human mind, precludes the possibility of moral perfection or any advance thereto. We may mitigate the intensity of pain by cultivating an appreciation for beauty, but we can never hope to cancel its reality except by removing its cause, which is Life itself.

(b) If we take up next Rousseau's suggestions, we find that the temper of Jean Jacques is much less rugged. He accepts the dictum that civilization is a failure. It has divided the human family into two disparate groups, the powerful and the unprivileged, generating for the one a superficial refinement like a social veneer and for the other a status of almost bestial degradation. It has thwarted native inclinations and created habits that do not express the primordial feelings of the race. Education has imposed upon children certain formal manners which make the flow

⁷ *Ibid.*, III, 409.

of unpremeditated caprice impossible.⁸ Wealth has brought in its train private corruptions, social dissensions, and hideous luxuries; and, since wealth is possible only under the reign of a civilized state, we must lay these defects to its charge. Instead of progress, what the world needs is a social *regress*, a return to the pastoral simplicity of the family group, where neither force nor the inequalities engendered by force have a legal status. The general will is the sole arbiter of a man's future. Man loses certain individual liberties, but gains what is infinitely more precious, his moral freedom. Thus, each owner has a right to his own estate, but the right is "subordinate to the right which the community has over all."⁹ The result must be that a gradual equalization of physical and mental resources is attainable by law, if not by nature. The verdict of history is that the feudal system, which continued to Rousseau's day, could not guarantee equal rights to all. Under the new system, men become the authors of the laws which they are required to obey. The ordinances of the civilized state are framed by those who expect to benefit directly by their operation, while the family system presupposes a common origin in law and therefore a common interest in its execution. Such a desired end can be reached only by a radical change in the structure of the body politic. Regress, which is not the same as retrogression, is the symbol of moral betterment.

The answer to Rousseau's proposal is clear. A distinguished critic has lately said that this and all similar theories would be "definitely refuted if it could be proved by an historical investigation that in no period in the past had men's lot been happier than in the present."¹⁰ Gibbon, indeed, had the curious opinion that the age of Marcus Aurelius would generally be celebrated as the happiest and most prosperous era in human experience. But no one, least of

⁸ "Emile."

⁹ "Social Contract," Bk. I, Ch. 9.

¹⁰ J. B. Bury, "Idea of Progress," p. 186.

all Rousseau himself, would venture to revert to the form of government, social sanctions, or religious incertitudes then prevailing. Analysis will show that the quest for an undefined simplicity of environment is a mistaken notion. Spencer's formula, in spite of its ponderous tone, contains the germ of some important truths. Rousseau's error has been repeated in religion circles: let us eliminate the embarrassments of the present by returning to the original practices of the Church. But Christian casuistry cannot cancel the contributions which Greek logic and Latin method have made to the orthodox belief and practice. History cannot retrace its steps; it can purge current thought of unacceptable and damaging tendencies, but it cannot project men's minds back into the forgotten situations of the past, to begin again the search for social justice. A regress is beyond the possibility of human reflection. What happens is that men capitalize the experiences of their progenitors, weaving them into the hopes and ideals of the present, with the result that with these as guide and goad, they press forward to a more highly integrated type of behavior, more complex, more exacting in form and function—an end which we may rightly call the ideal of progress, the recognition of personality and the institution of civil equality.

3. Instruments for Attaining Progress.

We have now isolated four concepts which belong to the definition of progress: reflection, personal autonomy, moral sensitiveness, and the differentiation of behavior. How shall they be converted into active instruments for social improvement? We shall follow the analytic rather than the synthetic method of study. The latter is open to serious objections. For one, changes are never complete. The assumption of Hegel that civilization proceeds by a natural dialectic is without foundation. The formalized culture of Asia, the intellectual fertility of Greece supplemented by the methodology of Rome, and, finally, the mature expressions of the German spirit do not represent the true gradations of

human experience. There is no closed dialectic in moral endeavors; Condorcet's opinion has a greater weight: reason and virtue in their growing interactions embody the several stages of human development. But all such speculations end in Spengler's sterile consummation—a decay of governing impulse and the extinction of spiritual vision. Moral progress does not move towards an absolute goal; it has its stops and reactions, its sudden accelerations, its unexpected increments of energy, but it cannot be categorically terminated. When the last stronghold of legalized slavery was demolished, its social force was by no means expended. The enfranchisement of the intellect, the release from economic dread, still await the call of another and wiser Lincoln. It is extremely valuable to list a catalogue of reforms already won; it is even more valuable to point out the fundamental properties of all achievements that bear the name of progress.

(a) Reflection, we said, is the property that distinguishes the moral man from his racial progenitors; it must therefore provide the first instrument for his moral advance. Reflection is expressed in knowledge; and knowledge means, at least, the function which enables him consciously and by direct intention to adapt himself to his environment. The point to be decided here is whether judgment or emotion is the controlling factor in effecting moral changes. Benjamin Kidd, in his "Science of Power," argues that the "emotion of the ideal is the supreme principle of efficiency in the collective struggles of the world."¹¹ He has before him the trenchant example of a titanic conflict—two types of social policy locked in deadly embrace. In his judgment, the fate of Germany was determined when her rulers adopted the nationalistic ideal as the rule of conduct. Statesman and student were trained in this formula, the result being that the psychic nature of the Germans underwent a complete revolution. The character of the mass depends on its "collective heredity," said Bergson, James, and Lange; they

¹¹ "Science of Power," Preface, p. v.

were wrong; it depends rather on the exercise of sentiment.

But Kidd reasons without his facts. (i) It is only reflective minds that can conceive and understand the value of the formula just mentioned, although it may be imbibed by the populace without the slightest analysis of its intent. But no historian of modern Germany can explain her social system without citing the influence of Fichte, Hegel, and Klausewitz, who framed and taught the doctrine of betterment by means of national consolidation. (ii) In the second place, the theory that feeling, not judgment, is the guide to progress runs afoul of the unanswered criticisms of the Hedonistic program. For emotions are tested by results; they are good if pleasure comes, they are bad if pain. Loyalty to the formula brought a holocaust of suffering such as mankind had never seen before. If pleasure be the end of moral conduct, then the fallacy of the ideal was amply exhibited. It is doubtful, however, whether any German subject of that school of thought would admit the causal sequence. It was the cogitated idea, not the furtive sentiment, that drove him to his fate.

The failure of the argument throws us back on the only other available function, judgment. Let us suppose that we have before us a specific moral project; how shall we seek its execution? The proposition of H. G. Wells that progress is won by the "construction of Utopias," is not borne out by the facts. It is true that credulity has sometimes displaced reflection, as when Rome sanctioned the crusades for the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher. We cannot suppose that Anselm or Abelard or Aquinas could have given unqualified assent to a program which contributed only ambiguously to the social or religious welfare of Europe. On the other hand, we can conceive of a concrete end, such as the elimination of poverty, which would command the attention of the wisest minds, providing the immediate proposals were modest and practical. Such a proposal is not subject to utopian dramatization; it requires a clear head, resolute will, and unemotional address. We must first be sure that the general opinion of society regards the end as an unmixed

good. If poverty as a social phenomenon is pernicious in its effects both on body and on mind, then no barrier stands in the way of seeking its removal. We must then approach the problem in its historic relations and ascertain what its immediate and remote causes are. Is it due to physical debility, to mental limitations, to the conditions of environment, to faulty education, to economic maladjustments, to the indifference of men to the wants of their brethren? These causes must first be determined, and when they are thoroughly investigated, the way for curing the ills will be suggested. No solution can be devised until the terms of the problem are known.

(b) In what way does personality become an instrument for social renewal? The laws of leadership has been succinctly stated by McDougall in these words:

The imitation of peoples follows the fundamental law of all imitation—the law, namely, that the source from which the impression comes is one enjoying prestige, is an individual or collective personality that is stronger, more complex, or more highly developed, and therefore to some extent mysterious, not completely ejective, to the imitators. Whether the ideas of an individual shall be accepted by his fellow countrymen depends not so much upon the nature of the ideas as upon the degree of prestige which that individual has or can secure.¹²

Two questions press for settlement. First, is a dominating personality, by sheer force of his objective behavior, capable of impressing his influence upon the public will? Citizens in many lands have watched with keen interest, not unmixed with anxiety, the sudden rise of an Italian journalist to a place of supreme power in the government. The time was ripe for political change. The parliamentary system had proved ineffective, quite unequal to meet the new social needs. Syndicalism, "direct action," economic distress, threats against the monarchy, uncertainty in foreign policy—these and many other problems faced a broken administration. Then the Fascist movement began and a new leader

¹² "Social Psychology," pp. 337-8.

appeared. Mussolini stood forth as the strong man of the hour; his success has been phenomenal. The kingship is overshadowed, parliament is prorogued, the press is restrained, his opponents are silenced. By dint of menace and persuasion he has remade the industrial, commercial, and financial structure of the nation; he has handled the thorniest issue with consummate tact and objective success—the relation of the Government to the Vatican. Can he permanently impress his ideas upon the people? McDougall is right: it is not the “nature of ideas,” but the “degree of prestige,” that wins the consent of the public.

The second question is more difficult. Will the influence of a determined leader change the curve of social development in the direction of progress? History alone can tell the story. What are the lasting values of Napoleon's career? His actual deeds are to many sensitive critics indelible stains on the escutcheon of moral honor. Still, a judicial mind must examine the following facts: the educational code which he organized, the Concordat he established with the Roman See, the steeling of the French temper after the divisive events of the Revolution, the encouragement to arts and letters by a recognition of the versatility of the French intellect—these are not inconsiderable elements in the progress which has attended the reorganization of the civil state. Napoleon's career seems to be an instance where the greatness of personality did not confuse the decisions of the public mind. But it is doubtful whether we may legitimately deduce from his career the principle that any exceptional leader is practically certain to change the collective curve of normal behavior. Progress is never wholly dependent on a single moral agent. McDougall again has put his finger on the controlling nerve:

But originality is a very rare quality, and still more rarely is it combined with the moral and physical and social advantages necessary for the acquisition of high prestige; hence, if the progress of each nation took place only by the acceptance of the ideas of its

own great men, progress would have been much slower than it actually has been.¹³

(c) What part does moral sensitiveness play in the drama of social renaissance? Mind and race and age differ in their response to the distinctions between right and wrong. Lecky has shown that Cato, who possessed a noble philosophic outlook, was guilty of the grossest inhumanity to his slaves.¹⁴ The quality we are considering is not a simple sympathetic reaction, such as the average intelligence makes to another's sufferings; nor is it a soft-hearted sentimentalism that sobs over the fortunes of Desdemona but cannot see the claims of duty in the wanton pollution of public office. Study the actions of John Howard, who was appointed to the position of High Sheriff in 1774. Says J. R. Green:

Before a year was over he had personally visited almost every English jail, and he found in nearly all of them frightful abuses which had been noticed half a century before but left unredressed by Parliament. Jailors who bought their place were paid by fees and suffered to extort what they could. . . . Debtors and felons were huddled together in the prisons, which Howard found crowded by the cruel legislation of the day. . . . Every jail was a chaos of cruelty and the foulest immorality, from which the prisoners could only escape by sheer starvation or through the jail-fevers which festered without ceasing in these haunts of wretchedness.¹⁵

His wise administration made a deep impression on the public conscience, and the statesmen of Europe and Colonial America began to study the entire problem of penal laws and practice. No historian can estimate the extraordinary influence of this simple-minded philanthropist. It is not far from the truth to say that no other event in the history of criminal procedure has so sharply bent the line of progress towards a just appreciation of the serious problems of social pathology.

The point is that a cold intellectual appraisal of the values

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 338.

¹⁴ "History of European Morals," I, 193.

¹⁵ "Short History of English People," p. 741.

of punishment will not change the center of moral gravity; the principle is universal. Comte has seriously erred in arguing that we may and should apply the laws of physical science to the behavior of the group. Humanity, he says, has now reached the third stage in its development; theology and metaphysics have been superseded by the Positivist method of exact analysis. This is radically different from the individualism of the eighteenth century. Private minds cannot make a "free examination" of the concepts of culture and thereby determine their respective duties. Duties are fixed through the collective inspection of objective facts by recognized savants. Education, ethics, and religion must be formulated by experts.¹⁶ The formalism of the Positivist creed, however, is discredited by the history of experience. Ideas have passed through the warm glow of individual genius, the Mosaic legislator, the logical mind of Plato, the resplendent personality of Jesus, who is the Christ. These are not leaders in the sense we have just defined; they do not seek to dominate the thought of their generation. The seeds of moral goodness are sown and the harvest is reaped in some unexplored future. The man who opens a new chapter in the volume of moral beauty may be but a humble inmate of the Bedford Jail, but his immortal allegory, the "Pilgrim's Progress," cuts its way into human callousness as the sword of Cromwell could not do. "The act passes away," says Dewey, "but its significance abides in the increment of meaning given to further growth."¹⁷

(d) The final test of progress is the increasing complexity of thought and behavior. Alexander suggests that human endeavor follows the biological laws of differentiation and comprehension. The first is qualitative, the second quantitative. Human nature repeats on a higher moral level the successful habits of an earlier age. Many of the concepts of Greek politics are present in our own system, but amazingly greater in meaning and value. The changes in political organization, in economic production, in the diversions of art

¹⁶ Cf. Bury, "Idea of Progress," Ch. 16.

¹⁷ Dewey and Tufts, "Ethics," p. 421.

and literature, reveal the quality of the multiple life we now lead. At the same time, the modern man is a member of the greater community; the Greek was hedged in by his city, or, at most, by his tribe. The modern man is in communication with the wide spaces of human interests abroad; far distant states are open to his feet, and he may enter with nothing more than a formal set of credentials. Furthermore, the art, science, and philosophy of a score of languages are his for the taking. Religion has grown humanistic; it can comprehend the most contradictory ideas under its hospitable shade. Thus, race and creed and distance have lost their ancient centrifugal force; they are moralized into actual agencies for the inculcation of altruistic ideas.

In particular, democracy has gripped the soul of moral manhood and left its imprint there. Its most potent instrument is law; but not law that coerces men into goodness, not statutes that convert sentimental theories into unenforceable commands. A system of law is not a concatenation of abstract rules, but the life-arteries of the state through which flows the warm blood of associated interests. Law is not personal; it is social; it embodies the complex organic relations of man to man in the busy intercourse of trade and reflective research. Today its boundaries are wider. International law is still hypothetical in its content and sanctions, but some authorized connection between nations must be set up. Commercial agreements, economic rapprochements, even treaties for the abolition of war, crowd upon the waiting world. They are glimmerings of progress, though actions often contradict their terms. They serve to expand the principles of moral integration and confirm the words of Alexander:

Just as the animal races extend their limits, and the highest animal, man, spreads his species over the earth, so his moral ideals seem to be directed towards a system of conduct which shall comprehend all humanity within a single law.¹⁸

¹⁸ "Moral Order and Progress," p. 398.

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PART IV

THE SANCTIONS OF ETHICS

CHAPTER I

THE PHYSICAL SANCTIONS

1. Sanction as Index to Moral Conduct.

Up to this point we have attempted to study the moral act in its relation to the structure of a good character and to the place of such a character in the social order. We have steadily argued that no legitimate act can be performed except when its terms have been defined by the appropriate motive and intent. The intent will embody the conditioned form of the action, specifically, the results that are conceived as tolerably sure to issue from the proposed behavior and that are bound to affect the moral value of the entire transaction. For the conditions under which conduct is carried out are essentially social in their origin, and the results cannot be rightly judged apart from their social implications. Even a strictly individual act like suicide casts its shadow upon the community; if nothing else, it causes men to stop and inquire whether a duly certified moral agent has the right arbitrarily to dispose of an organic property called *body*, which was produced in the group without his consent and belongs in every respect to the corporate structure of society. Suicide seems to be an unwarranted assertion of a function never formally committed to the individual. Certainly, the more serious consequences are social in content—the discredit falling on the family, the shudder of horror passing through associated circles, the disinclination of religious bodies to say the last rites over the remains, all serving to fix the moral turpitude of the deed.

The point we cannot avoid noticing is the complexity of the conditions which attend every endeavor, no matter how

personal the event may be. Hence, we may agree with Alexander that "every law imprseed from above is nothing more than the expression of the will of the whole society," and that any man who tries to separate his responsibility from the effects of his action has a wholly inadequate understanding of the logical meaning of behavior.¹

But now a new and extremely important question appears. We have noted the argument of the Utilitarians, who hold that the sole incentive to the pursuit of virtue and aversion from vice lies in the realm of feeling. "Pleasure and, what comes to the same thing, immunity from pain are," says Bentham, "the final causes" of moral behavior.² The degree of blameworthiness hinges upon the amount of pain escaped and pleasure enjoyed. Since this is true, there must be in nature certain prescribed motives which force men to follow the line of virtuous conduct. These motives are four in number, and are denoted by the legal term *sanctions*—physical, political, moral, and religious. They derive their validity from their connection with the feeling-tones of the body. In fact, the last three are reducible to the first, supposing that the sanctions of religion are made effective in this life and not in some immaterial existence. Conduct thus becomes objective; it belongs to a sphere where some sort of observable uniformity may be attained. For Bentham, regularity comes by the operation of established law or custom. Hence, it is to be expected that the only worthwhile motive he can distinguish will be that of penalty and reward. These may be systematically measured and sensibly applied; they are the true guides to or deterrents from action; they constitute the essence of morality.

Now, since we shall use the concept of sanction as an indispensable term in scientific ethics, it is imperative that we adduce a working definition of its meaning. The Utilitarian principle must be rejected as inadequate, largely because it lifts to the place of primacy a factor which is necessarily found in every motion of the conscious mind.

¹"Moral Order and Progress," p. 325.

²"Morals and Legislation," Ch. 3.

Feeling is the concomitant of behavior, whether it be the accelerated pulse, bringing the heartbeats above the threshold of attention, or the appreciation of a massive symphony, or the resolution of a great moral crisis. Pleasure or pain ensues upon the change of mental response; it is the new tone forcing its quality upon the behaving subject. It cannot therefore be the test of moral value when it crowns the completion of a just or unjust act. Instead of giving a definitive moral color to behavior, it takes its meaning from the causes that brought about the specific effects. This is peculiarly true of the first sanction, which deals with irreversible natural laws. Pain is not a reason *why* a command should be obeyed; it is the organic consequence of the infraction of the law. The distinction is basal. Pain expounds the temper and fructifying power of law; we might not know the worth of law to human life, were it not at times broken. In the same way that an infant apprehends the relation between rule and pain when he falls even a little distance, the mature mind can from experience understand and formulate the significance of the universal law.

The principle is valid, whether we consider the action of cosmic forces or the everyday movements of thought. Thus, moral behavior is a series of related elements terminating in its effects upon the bodies and minds of other social units. It cannot fail, then, to embody the meaning of restraints. But restraint is not the commanding motive, as Bentham insists; it is rather, to use Alexander's word, an "inducement" to proper conduct. It teaches us that law and its sanctions comprise a single system. We have the native right to shrink from predictable pains and to seek all possible expansion of body and mind, but we must hold in reserve the moral qualification already examined,³ namely, whether a more dominating principle should not impel us to endure pain and forego pleasure in deference to the major law of consistent character. The point which we must not miss is that morality cannot be built on the negative

³ Pt. III, Ch. 5.

formula of avoiding pains, important as the formula is. It is true, as Austin says, that the "stronger desire of avoiding the sanction gradually extinguishes the weaker desire" for the possession of the forbidden object. On the other hand, the "man who fulfills his duty *because* he fears the sanction is an *unjust* man, although his conduct be just."⁴ Jurisprudence as well as ethics recognizes the difference between objective and subjective goodness—the secular goodness of result and the goodness of an inspiring motive.

But what sort of consequences should be classified as sanctions? They may be represented by their quality, pleasure and pain, or by the situation in which they come to expression, either *external*, that is, in the group, or *internal*, that is, in the individual mind. The latter classification is followed by authors like Butler, Mill, and even Spencer, who support their choice by illuminating examples. We shall have occasion to demonstrate that the intra-mental sanctions are as powerful as the external, and that, as time goes on, they will assume greater importance in the life of the cultivated community. The former division of sanctions is well-nigh universally adopted by moralists who give a place to the legitimacy of the concept. But the propriety of the division is vigorously contested by writers who see in the term only a legal application. Austin, for instance, argues that rewards (corresponding to pleasures) have no right to recognition in the sphere of civil procedure. Rewards are affiliated with *wishes*; penalties, with *commands*. Duties cannot be enforced by an appeal to the remuneration attached; they must get their coercion from the sufferings caused by neglect. Furthermore, the offer of a reward for services rendered constitutes a new imperative, this time laid upon the offerer, not upon the obeyer. The element of obligation which always goes with sanction is therewith cancelled. I may be "inclined to comply with the wish of another by the hope of advantage or good, but it is only by the chance of incurring evil that I am *bound* or *obliged* to

⁴"Lectures on Jurisprudence," Vol. I, p. 449.

compliance.”⁵ Thus, civil duties are conditioned by threats that imply damage to body or estate. The promise of ordinary compensations leaves the average mind cold and unresponsive. Governments have noted the realistic indifference of this attitude and have deliberately made their rewards mere remunerations *after the event*, not prior incentives to the performance of a task. Witness the gift of a peerage in England and the thanks of Congress in America.

This argument from jurisprudence is amply borne out by the facts. The law does not specify definite and appropriate emoluments to be conferred upon citizens who consistently conform to its terms. To be sure, the granting of special privileges by the indirect method of a general statute is not an unfamiliar incident in the experience of the most enlightened nations. Thus, the protective tariff has contributed to the growth of private fortunes in a manner that staggers the imagination of a statistician and troubles the moral sensibilities of a serious thinker. Thrift, ingenuity, partisan enthusiasm, pecuniary subscriptions of considerable moment, have met with a suitable reward. Dutiful citizens bear lofty titles in Great Britain and occupy dignified ambassadorial posts accredited from the United States.⁶ Austin has none of these incidental cases in mind. He holds that law creates an obligation on the part of its subjects and that any breach in the obligation lays them open to the operation of the legal sanctions. There are no positive rewards. But in this matter he is wrong; for he does not take into account the stated privileges which every law-abiding citizen enjoys but which are not set down, point for point, in the record. They are named, often in grandiloquent terms, in the organic law of the land, as, for example, in the Constitution of the United States and its astonishing amendments. Freedom of action, protection from impending ills, the rights of association, the “pursuit of happiness,” and even the exercise of the elective franchise

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁶ Cf. Westermarck, “Origin and Development of Moral Ideas,” I, 167.

(whose value is somewhat dubious)—these are prescribed rewards inherent in the very nature of citizenship and removed or diminished in scope only when men are convicted of deliberate infractions of the law. It is therefore not alone in ethics that positive sanctions have their appropriate application; in the organization of the social group they enshrine a necessary and fruitful principle.

It should be observed, however, that not all moralists give assent to these remarks. The brilliant and fertile mind of Guyau has conceived and entered a caveat. "Is it true," he asks, "that there exists a natural and rational link between the morality of the mind and the rewards or sufferings caused to the feelings?" He charges that, in the judgment of history as well as of reflective thought, morals rest on the basis of a calculated balance of service and compensation. The virtuous man "gets a prize for his virtue," the criminal a "simple pinprick." He examines the interpretations of the concept of social justice and finds them faulty. Distributive justice, as expressed in recognition of merit or awarding of adequate deserts, is an impossible article in practice. Penal retribution offends the sensibilities of the moral mind and hence must be abandoned. The concept of moral equivalences is without meaning, hence has no place in social evaluations. We should substitute the formula of "loving kindness" as the true incentive to action. Sanction is now defined as brotherhood, not a material but a moral reward; not a physical but a spiritual redress.⁷ Guyau rises to the heights of poetic inspiration, but he adds nothing to the meaning of the term under review. If sanctions remain as facts of behavior, they will still embody the necessary results of action, whether casual or deliberate. Nature and rational experience have prescribed their objective forms—pleasure to virtue, pain to vice. These results *sanction*, that is, consecrate, the validity of the moral program to which specific moral actions belong.

⁷ "Morality Independent of Obligation and Sanction," Eng. trans., p. 153.

2. Health and the Physical Sanction.

It is a familiar truism that the first facts of which a human being is aware are those belonging to the physical structure of the organism. These facts register his immediate needs, together with the distress that accompanies the failure to satisfy them. The elementary sanctions act as unconscious safeguards against personal injuries which might endanger health, limb, or life. This is the negative side of sanction. There is also a positive side. Health is not an inappreciable state of feeling; it is the deposited energy of the body by means of which the subject is able to express his full capacities in contact with his environment. Whenever health is impaired in the individual or the group, competition with one's neighbors is enormously lessened. The prime requisite for success in the development of a career embraces soundness of organs, knowledge of their function, control over the function's discharge, and the determination to make such control inure to the realization of the final end, namely, self-preservation. We may not infer from these rules that men of reduced physical strength have always failed to play their part in the struggle for existence. Not to speak of Epictetus, Spinoza, and Montaigne, we may mention military men like Cæsar, statesmen like Talleyrand, and religious leaders like Calvin, who have disregarded the disabilities of the flesh in order to work their will in public affairs. Still, we may rightly assume that they labored under an unnatural handicap, not imposed by themselves, but none the less effective in restricting the range of activity and limiting their influence.

It is not the business of ethics to diagnose the causes of the trouble and prescribe remedies for their cure. That belongs to the science and skill of the medical profession. It is rather the duty of the moral teacher to point out the standing validity of the physical sanctions and to insist on a rigid compliance with their terms. The simplest forms of behavior require our first attention. It might be thought that the average citizen was fully aware of his obligations

in this field. Experience is not slow to inculcate the lessons of sobriety and regularity in matters of food and drink; excess in either kind of indulgence spells pain and disqualification for the serious tasks of society. Linked with these appetites as of immediate bodily origin is the urgency of the sex-impulse. Here the demands of nature are peculiarly strong, and, under the suggestive appeals which modern tastes flaunt before the receptive eye, become almost overpowering. Unwise delicacy keeps the grave results of submission away from the mind of youth and maiden—until it is too late. The evidence of history, with the degradation of woman, the decadence of masculine virility, the prevalence of social diseases, makes but a slight impression upon the uninstructed ear. Must the sanction be applied in its ravaging fury before the human race can understand its inevitable meaning? May not its positive form, instinct with the beauty of harmonious love, the elation of physical intimacy, happiness in the home, the tender regard for children, bring to cultured minds and consecrated bodies the deeper joys of moral devotion?

To these more fundamental sanctions we may add the constraints of a regimented course of action. Two extremes must be confronted: the first, a tendency to exhaust the tension of nerve and muscle by a too close application to one's vocation; the second, a disinclination to undertake a steady task of any sort, and hence a surrender to the habits of sloth. Both tend to lower the body's vitality and to diminish the initiative of the will. It is futile to plead for the one that family interests require the protection of our social credit, possible only through enlarged resources; or, for the other, that our abilities are small and opportunities cramped. In neither case does the sanction fail to work; it checks and overrules the false sanctions that pride or humility has set up. Neurasthenia and its depressions, torpor and its deadening mental effects, necessarily and surely ensue upon the deliberate neglect of the laws of health.

At this point a difficult question emerges. Can physical

deterioration of a private individual be the subject of official concern by the legal authorities? For example, should the English public have entered the sanctuary of DeQuincey's home and laid upon him the hand of coercion, not merely warning him of the dread consequences of the excessive use of opium, but literally snatching the drug from his fingers and putting him under guard as indemnity against future indulgence? The proposal would have been preposterous to the British temper. If a man was willing to endure the pains of nature's vengeance, provided no injury was done to neighbor or state, he could not be stayed in his course. The state may admonish, but cannot coerce; it may plead, but not disarm. The personal rights of the citizen are secure. If one man's actions are curtailed on the ground that he is injuring himself, where would the process stop? Fowler has stated the situation correctly:

The existence of many self-regarding offenses is known only to a man's self, or his nearest relatives, friends, or neighbors. If society were seriously to undertake the punishment of such offenses, it would be necessary to institute a system of the strictest espionage, which would destroy all confidence, and poison many of the most intimate and agreeable relations of life. And to maintain such a system in efficiency it would be essential that the police should have at its disposal the most extravagant rewards, for the remuneration of informers. It would, in fact, be impossible to stop short of the institution of a moral inquisition, with all its hideous appliances and the whole train of its pernicious consequences.⁸

But health assumes a public character in a much more urgent and a strictly legitimate form. It depends not alone on heredity and personal habits but often and more directly on the conditions under which life must be maintained. Historical examples attest the corrosive effects of an unsanitary environment. England suffers to this day from the blight incurred by the massing of her populations in cramped and unhygienic quarters at the beginning of the industrial revolution. Mrs. Gaskell's "North and South"

⁸ "Principles of Morals," p. 149.

and Disraeli's "Sybil" preserve vivid pictures of the poverty, disease, and moral decadence thus engendered. It is an apothegm of great significance that social success and physical health go hand in hand. If, therefore, specific cankers in the body politic are allowed to fester either through the rapacity of wealth or the venality of politics, there can be but one issue to the case. The housing problem is an example. Unsanitary dwellings breed disease, and disease communicates its virus to the group. Property values begin to decline, uncontaminated—or contaminated—families transfer their residence to other centers, business feels the pressure of slackening demand. The sanction cannot be avoided. Health is the first requisite to social welfare. It is on record that entire tribes have been obliterated by the ravages of a malady. In these days of rapid and universal communication, destructive germs are swept broadcast over the earth, as happened in 1918 during the World War. The protection of the public health is thus an initial duty of government.⁹ If it cannot be achieved by fear, it may be by an appeal to the social sense of mankind; for, as Mill says, even if the natural sanctions of impending pain were held in abeyance, the conviction of the unity of sentiment and feeling may stand as the ultimate and controlling sanction.¹⁰

3. Physical Culture and Its Sanction.

The treatment of the body we have thus far examined deals largely with the principle of prevention: we should endeavor to maintain the vital equilibrium by abstaining from practices which tend to throw our physical and instinctive movements out of gear. The imperative, however, is twofold; and we shall now study the constructive factors in the problem. The problem enters the field of psychology

⁹ The question of public health has now assumed international importance, as may be seen in the editorial from the *London Times* quoted in *Science*, Nov. 16, 1928, where the recent actions of the League of Nations are discussed.

¹⁰ "Utilitarianism," Ch. 3.

and may be posited in the oft-quoted words of Spinoza: "I would call attention to the mechanism of the human body, which far surpasses in complexity all that has been put together by human art. . . . The body can by the sole laws of its nature do many things which the mind wonders at."¹¹ Disregarding the philosophical phases of the subject, we may agree with him that a complete program of physical development has never been successfully worked out. Plato, indeed, had strongly urged that the several offices of the body have but one coördinating principle, namely, the expression of the excellence of soul.¹² Hence, the harmonious mind may control and direct the specific functions of organ and member. To this end he advocated a stern and varied discipline and at the same time the cultivation of the softening rhythms of music. But the attempt to reach an adequate philosophy of the body's needs has always met the opposition of religious teachers, who have spared no pains to discourage attention to the demands of the "flesh," while they argued for devotion to the "things of the spirit." The Hellenic and Hebraic formulas of behavior are essentially contradictory. The exact determination of the relations between body and mind may be held in abeyance; but one fact is plain, that neither religion nor philosophy nor statecraft can perform its tasks aright if the currents of bodily action are choked or diverted into false channels.

We assume, then, that the exertions of a complex civilization require appropriate training for the unfolding of natural powers. How shall the human physique be brought to its full stature? In order to answer this question we should make a careful analysis of the actual results desired, such as the hardening of muscles, the increase of lifting strength, the attainment of bodily poise, the creation of alertness of attention, the ability to concentrate all organic and nervous energies on the execution of a particular project. Kilpatrick has called these results "concomitant learnings," a term which seems to signify the

¹¹ "Ethics," Pt. III, Prop. 2, Scholium.

¹² "Republic," Bk. III, pp. 403-412.

unconscious acquisition of control over the constitutional functions of the body by means of suitable exercises.¹³ At the same time, it should not be forgotten that these are contributory values which may be rationally sought only so long as they do not interfere with the fundamental duties of personal development and social citizenship. To be "in the pink of condition" is a laudable aim for men and women of every age. No person has a right to let his bodily powers dwindle in vigor through lack of systematic attention. The imperative is the more binding on those who possess certain hampering defects imbedded in their inheritance. Here it is futile to deplore the exigencies of fortune; we should rather determine what moral qualities may be derived from its terms—persistency, sobriety, equanimity. Furthermore, such a course involves a brave and sustained attempt to right the wrongs of nature by a discreet system of physical culture. The judgment of trustworthy guides should be sought and followed. It matters little what the scientific theory is; one thing is certain: it will include the principle of *effort supported by interest*. Formal discipline is a necessary implement in military education, where the object in view is a consolidated attack upon the massed enemy. The individual, however, has a different task. The dull monotony of exercise must be lightened by a knowledge of the end to be attained, but even this at times scarcely relieves the burden of continued drill. Interest must be touched by the commanding social sense, excited, for example, by the strains of martial music or the element of competition. Soldiers will march weary miles without fatigue under the inspiring urge of rhythmic melodies. The zest of the organized game enables the player to forget the pains of effort, the toils of repeated exercise. The center of mental gravity is shifted. Psychology, not physiology alone, provides the solution of the problem. Spontaneous delight joined with the exhilarating discipline of work fertilizes afresh the latent virtues of temperance and steady-

¹³ Quoted by J. F. Williams, "Principles of Physical Education," p. 381.

ness, virtues that are supremely needed in the democratic order in which we live. In fact, as has been pertinently remarked,¹⁴ this method of physical culture agrees most cordially with the social principle underlying our system of political relations. Contrast the formal instruction of the German *Turngemeinde* with the personal initiative of the American college games, and the superiority of the latter will be established without a doubt.

But here an emphatic caution should be issued. The athlete is almost as imposing a figure in the modern world as in the palæstræ and stadia of Greece. His training is as severe and his achievements may be as great, though he has no resourceful poets to celebrate his deeds. He is informed that in the pursuit of his end intellectual gifts and moral habits of a high order are required, although he may easily become, as Plato says, "too much of a savage."¹⁵ The phrase is used advisedly; it indicates the fundamental error in all public competitions. The instruction in Greece and America seems to be the same: "Play the game to win." Contestants are set in array like miniature enemies; a mimic state of warfare seems to be declared. Slogans are framed to stir the supporters of the opposing teams to vociferous and even catastrophic fervor. Blaring bands and streaming pennons proclaim the feelings of the embattled hosts. Casualties, sometimes of a serious nature, ensue from the encounter. Thousands of spectators brave the chilling winds to shout for their favorite gladiators. Fortunes pour into the coffers of the athletic associations, and other fortunes are lost on the betting books. Greece did not commercialize her sports—has America so foresworn her oath? We may choose three deductions out of many that could be made. First, athleticism of this sort is not genuine physical development; it is physical excess for a meager few and physical deficiency for the multitude. Second, the wrong moral principles are inculcated in the struggle. Young men who "play to win" in sports will do the same in business.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

¹⁵ "Republic," III, 410.

The festering sores of the business world are diagnosed by these words. The economic policy of coöperation is sometimes *said* to prevail; the actual spirit at work is the impulse of the jungle. Third, the emphasis on spectacular athletics debases the true aim of education. Education does not forget the claims of the bodily organism, but it demands, in Plato's words, that "a beautiful soul should harmonize with a beautiful form."¹⁶ The burden of proof rests with those who would substitute public spectacles of Roman dimensions for the quiet work of the classroom and the study.

4. The Sanction of Relaxation.

It is assumed in all civilized countries that men and women are under a natural obligation to engage in gainful pursuits. This is in tacit agreement with Ruskin's sentiment that "life without industry is guilt," an agreement so thoroughgoing that families whose economic support is guaranteed by legal statute or vested wealth are unwilling to incur the opprobrium of an idle and profitless existence. But the second part of his epigram does not receive the same enthusiastic approbation: "industry without art is brutality." Indeed, many eloquent advocates of the "gospel of work" take umbrage at the suggestion that we should intermit the rigors of serious application by activities carried on in a lighter vein. To them the admonition of Cowley, the quaint poet of the seventeenth century, is without point:

To thy bent mind some relaxation give,
And steal one day out of thy life to live.

To a host of other workers, such an invitation comes not as a counsel but as a taunt. For work is not an insidious delight, the way to a coveted prize, but a reminder of the hard and cruel tyrannies of need. If work should cease,

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 402.

bread must cease too. Men live so near the precipice of want that the visit of disease, the stress of social upheaval, or some natural cataclysm like tornado, earthquake, volcanic eruption, scorching heat, will push them over its edge. Hence, the argument of Cowley's verse means nothing to men whose waking moments are encumbered with fear. Still, if a social mandate has caused the small group of privileged persons to see the moral value of work, social legislation can provide an adequate respite from toil for multitudes of workers in city and countryside. The industrial program already enacted by progressive states, supported as it is by scientific invention and efficiency methods, has accomplished this very purpose, and society is now faced with a new problem: What shall men do with their leisure time? In many nations education has found its way into the humblest home, exciting impulses and creating needs not formerly understood. Leisure and ignorance ended in stupidity; where will leisure and learning lead?

The objective solution cannot be determined until we have examined the psychological factors in the case. For, in general, a reaction from the sustained effort of a vocation may, if we are not on our guard, produce one of two antithetical attitudes: either the subject may swing to the extreme of lassitude, declining all mental calculation or muscular exertion, or he may in a state of nervous tension plunge into the forms of dissipation which he finds most exciting—motor driving, cabaret dinners, the voluptuous dances of the modern mode, the deceptive similitudes of the cinema. Which of these two is the more destructive it is difficult to decide; but it is quite certain that the basic meaning of relaxation as a moral process has been completely missed. The word suggests release from a burdensome strain, and has been historically applied to the removal of a disability such as the decree of outlawry or excommunication. Whatever may be the delight we extract from our work, there is always a diminution of nerve-energy accompanying application of any kind. Change of work, as James remarks, may be the best recreation obtain-

able. But whether we reckon it work or play, we may be sure that it cannot *re-create* the flagging zeal without a change in the mental attitude. To be sure, play as well as work contains a tincture of seriousness,¹⁷ that is, we play because play represents one of the organic purposes of human behavior, the spontaneous use of native energies unhindered by a set and obligatory task. A part of the brutality of the industrial program consists in not knowing how to retreat for a time from the tensions of the shop and live the good life of joy and beauty and calm. Ruskin saw in the cultivation of the æsthetic sense a relief from the monotony of labor, and he therefore preached incessantly the doctrine of beauty as an antidote to fatigue. The modern man, whatever his station, needs to learn the lesson and learn it well.

The problem of leisure time is urgent. Thoughtful educators have insisted that the formal instruction of the school should be supplemented by scientific training in recreation. Supervised play has been adopted as a true pedagogic principle, not to repress the spontaneous motions of body and mind by arbitrary rules, but to direct them into the right channels. Progressive cities have equipped public recreational centers under the care of trained specialists to the end that the physical development of the city's youth may proceed under the best possible conditions. If we change the terms of the problem, social leaders of rural communities may easily be led to see the gravity of the situation. At the same time, the range of application must be widely extended. All ages and types of instruction should be brought within the general field of consideration. The movement for "adult education" in England is a step in the right direction. The title is faulty, but its intended connotation is of great value. It implies that the human mind is capable of growth beyond the limit where the growth of body ceases. In fact, life in its capacious scope is an art which may be broken up into its coördinate branches, fine arts, utilitarian arts, arts of study, and arts of play. In all of

¹⁷ Cf. R. C. Cabot, "What Men Live By," p. 91, *et seq.*

these, but especially in the first and last, we should exclude the strictly scientific method of approach. To be sure, painting and sculpture have their formal technique based upon a thorough knowledge of the laws of physics and mathematics. In like manner, relaxation may be carefully planned and sometimes executed under the guidance of a wise preceptor. In every case, however, the mere mechanics of behavior should be concealed from view, except when it is advisable to expound the value of rationalized diversion as distinguished from mere emotional reaction. The meaning of leisure must be stated in no uncertain language, since in our day the security and progress of the state depend not alone upon the nature of the vocational service of the citizen but also upon the use made of his leisure hours.

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CHAPTER II

SYMPATHY AND ITS SANCTION

Is sympathy an independent integer in human behavior? The question is one of fact, not of origins. It may be safely left to the psychologist to determine how the recognition of the movements of other men has become a definite principle of conduct. The simplest solution seems to be found in the tendency of the animal to repeat the feelings of its kind. Some writers, like Tarde, have called this tendency an instinct of imitation, while others, among them McDougall, have eliminated any suggestion of intelligent appreciation and named it a "sympathetic induction of the emotions." Sympathy, in this sense, is totally bereft of the sentimental regard which romance has associated with the word. It is a spontaneous output of psychic energy at the behest of kindred affections in another. We smile because the group is in a smiling mood; we weep or with difficulty refrain from tears because of the manifested sorrow of a neighbor. The law is not a status deliberately agreed upon by society as the instrument for registering its common feelings; it is the provision of nature for making our common heritage poignantly perceptible to every human subject. Sympathy is one of the strongest sanctions man is capable of employing in civil intercourse. Hence, we are quite within the bounds of truth in saying that nature has fixed its power in the consciousness of man and brute as the prime method for perpetuating racial character, not to say the structure of the race itself.

1. Sympathy as Sentiment: Adam Smith's Theory.

Thus far we have considered the organic process which experience and education may successfully promote but

cannot originate. Ethics, however, proceeds beyond this point. Some of its most influential expositors have accepted the "social sense" as the basis of the greater part of moral conduct. It is proper to examine the attitude of a representative thinker like Adam Smith, who grounds his entire system in the principle we are analyzing. We may note at the outset that Bentham's axiom of amity as a "semi-social" sanction has only a limited application in the theory of the moral sentiments. Bentham thinks that amity is the constitutional desire which prompts us to be "on good terms" with our neighbor in the hope that we may thus secure the "benefit of his spontaneous and gratuitous service." It produces a flexibility of temper which cannot be found in the character of a reserved and uncommunicative citizen. He slyly adverts to the seductive approaches of the British politician when a candidate for a seat in parliament, concluding that he is "probably a better character than the secretary of a vizier in Constantinople," who is responsible to one man only for his place.¹

For Adam Smith, sympathy is not a calculated schedule, although he admits that interest in the fortunes of other men will at least insure a modicum of pleasure which otherwise might be lost. Sympathy is founded wholly on the operation of the imagination. It is useless to suppose that one mind can enter into the actual feelings or sensory experiences of another. Be the suffering never so violent, we cannot make it our own by direct perception; "it is by changing places in fancy with the sufferer that we come either to conceive or to be affected by what he feels." Furthermore, the grief or joy observed must suggest a similar possible experience for ourselves, or its intensity will entirely escape us. No sensitive mind can follow the details of disasters by land or sea—passengers on the floundering ship sinking into the icy waters, with the lifeboats badly manned and discipline well-nigh suspended, the terror-stricken Sicilian populace fleeing from the blazing

¹ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 10.

flood of lava which poured from *Ætna's* fiery crater—without a deep stirring of kindred emotions. It is difficult to explain such familiar mental phenomena except upon the assumption that a social impulse guides the fancy in its flight and in the more moralized situations suits the action to the thought, turning sympathy into benevolence and fancy into firm resolution. Unfortunately, the connection between fancy and deed is not causal; for emotions excited by momentary inspection may end in programless sterility. Thus, subsequent to a withering experience, the mind recoils from all contacts—dramas, persons, books, events—which suggest the incidence of pain and engrosses itself in the gayety of irresponsible society.

But even sympathetic reactions have their limits. For sympathy is not alone the growth of emotional energy; it takes hold upon our cognitions, bent of mind, body of experience, integrated mass of sentiments. Sentiment is both feeling and thought. The formation of public opinion is a case in point. Such a sentiment is a nucleus of ideas gathered about a single proposition, for example, the nation's policy in dealing with smaller governmental units—the United States and the people of Mexico, England and the sovereignty of Egypt. Deep-seated prejudices lie beneath the projected policy, shape its terms and control its expression. Still, reflection is silently at work breaking down established obsessions and pointing out the need of sympathetic judgment. This means that sentiment requires an appraisalment of the facts in question and a thorough understanding of the passions evoked. Adam Smith cites a typical situation in these words:

A stranger passes by us in the street with all the marks of the deepest affliction; and we are immediately told that he has just received the news of the death of his father. It is impossible that in this case we should not approve of his grief. Yet it may often happen, without any defect of humanity on our part, that, so far from entering into the violence of his sorrow, we should scarce conceive the first movements of concern upon his account. . . . We have learned, however, from experience that such a misfortune

naturally excites a degree of sorrow, and we know that if we took time to consider his situation, we should without doubt most sincerely sympathize with him.²

The principle here involved is that we can elicit an emotional response only when we agree with the person affected in our outlook upon nature and society. Thus, if æsthetic tastes and moral values are the same, we may set up relations of genuine reciprocity, and we should not expect a collision of principles or actions. But there is a matter of more intimate concern, where subtle dangers may possibly lurk. Suppose that my companion fails to understand my misfortunes and to resent my injuries, fails to appreciate the small nuances of emotion which the impersonal public can neither perceive nor comprehend; then all congruence of sentiment disappears. If we generalize the given facts, we may convert the feeling of private interest into the comprehensive spirit of goodwill, which is the proper attitude of the citizen in the social state. The best criterion of social progress is found, we are told, in the extension of the range of the sympathetic sanction. The active savage tribes rarely number more than a hundred souls; more than that would disturb the balance of collective power.³ The sense of solidarity moves at first in narrow channels, but slowly widens its course until the complexity of modern civilization is reached. Public character is determined by the two factors just analyzed, objective judgments and subjective intimacies.

Is sympathy, then, a constraining motive in human behavior? The question, we said, is one of fact; it depends neither on the genesis of the feeling nor on the complexion of the motive, that is, whether it records an inchoate desire for private gain or the adoption of the good of others as the animating purpose. Both elements enter into typical behavior. It may be true, as Fowler argues, that in the majority of instances our first thought is the expectation of bene-

² "Theory of Moral Sentiments," Pt. I, Sec. 1, Ch. 3.

³ Cf. A. Sutherland, "Origin and Growth of Moral Instinct," I, 360.

ficial results to ourselves; we cannot even escape the feeling that in giving pleasure to others we obtain compensating pleasures on our own account.⁴ It may also be true that both egoistic and altruistic feelings go back to a prior tendency, namely, the love of approbation and the fear of disapprobation. This implies that a man may undertake to "conciliate the goodwill of those around him by his ordinary conduct, especially in practical affairs"—a reflective idea that can exist only in intelligences that are aware of the interests, powers, activities, and even rights, of their fellows. But whatever its source, the fact that sympathy is a constitutional *drive* which every man is obliged to respect is undeniable. Hence, we may follow its fortunes in the individual and collective practice of its rules.

2. The Concrete Status of the Sympathetic Sanction.

Both psychology and ethics assume that sympathetic induction, especially in its elementary forms, takes place between adjacent individuals. No doubt the expression of extensor feelings was originally bestowed upon members of the immediate family. Hence, the importance and respectability of the sanction are first understood in the felicities and sorrows of the common hearth. Since discipline is essential to the preservation of order, obedience must be taken as a matter of course; the child may protest, but he is forced to yield. He has simply *grown into* the customs of the household group. When we step outside the area of birth and nurture, the moral status seems to undergo a distinct change. The boy in school faces a new set of rules and faces them also with an altered mind; he is not an organic part of the system; he has entered it of his own will. Furthermore, he is aware of a parallel set of rules not imposed by the masters but organized into a code by the student body. The morals of the group are defined by its terms. It represents the solidary character of the group

⁴"Principles of Morals," p. 165.

and enables the group to confront the "enemy," that is, the staff of teachers, with united ranks. The central article in the code is the prescription against "peaching." Rupture in discipline must be detected by the official monitor, not by the testimony of the pupil. The sanction of the group at this point is imperative. Such a sanction obtains on the higher levels of education as well as in the secondary grades. There are cases on record in American colleges where students who have reported delinquencies in examinations have suffered virtual ostracism by their fellows as a result. The group sanction as applied indicates, not that the student body is deficient in its regard for truth, but that the wrong method was adopted in discovering the offender. Even where the "honor system" is in vogue, the objection still holds, though the ruling principle of the system is the intramural detection of the offense. Hence, the position of a thoroughly conscientious man is palpably hard; strong, indeed, must be his character if he is to stand up against the consolidated impact of undergraduate disapproval and tell the truth without reservation.

We pass next to those social spheres where the practical affairs of the world are transacted. They are roughly divided into two classes, the professional and the economic. The former are distinguished by two qualities; they must possess a substantial body of knowledge—divinity, medicine, jurisprudence—and they must put these acquisitions at the service of the community without regard to the nature or amount of its remuneration. The second class of citizens may be equally intelligent, but their ends are directed specifically to the satisfaction of the economic needs of society. They deal, for the most part, with materials that admit of quantitative measurement; hence, the accumulation of money becomes the logical aim of the group. It is usual, today, to distinguish between the "function of business"—how to create and distribute goods—and the motives which prompt individuals to engage in its processes. But the plain fact is that men give time, strength, ingenuity, to business pursuits for one purpose only, and the contradic-

tory proposition appears alone on the published program of some "business science" club. The professional groups may readily formulate a code of conduct and require their members to live up to it. Can the banking, industrial, and commercial interests—employers and workers alike—do the same? Is not the tendency visible on every hand to make the exigencies of the market the sole rule of procedure? For example, can the maxim of one price to every customer for equal quantities of goods be successfully adopted and enforced? Can the policy of rebate, which has evoked such acrimonious debate in recent years, be justified under any conceivable conditions? Again, can the current modes of exaggeration in advertising be reconciled with the common definition of honesty or with the extreme Utilitarian dogma that "honesty is the best policy"? These are some of the thorny problems that demand settlement; can the sentiment of the group working through objective sanctions like the boycott or social propaganda put an end to such demoralizing practices? Wherever the civil law can be invoked to give redress, the public obtains substantial help. We are considering, however, not legal restraint, but the social rectification that comes through a fair understanding of the meaning and scope of sympathy. The failure of external methods is painfully obvious; for the temper of an aroused public cools rapidly, and the *advocatus diaboli* can always be summoned to defend the claims of his injured client. The sanction of an instructed sentiment is the only resource left. Education, judicious statements in the press, papers at the meeting of trade associations, the public approbation of bankers, merchants, industrialists, and labor leaders who reject the opportunities for "graft," these are the quiet but ultimately effective means for reaching the desired end.

The situation with the learned professions is quite different. Some of them are hedged in by legal ordinances which automatically inflict penalties for proved offenses—the disbarment of lawyers, the cancellation of medical licenses, the removal of a teacher from his job. But it is the code of rules agreed upon by the group that gives the real

ethical complexion to professional practice. Some rules are held in common by all professions, for example, that there should be no competition for place except such as suffices to reveal each man's distinctive qualifications. There are other rules that apply only to the individual group, especially those relating to the schedule of fees. Shall men who procure business for the practitioner be rewarded for their pains? "It is detrimental to the public good," says the Medical Code, "and degrading to the profession, and therefore unprofessional, to give or receive a commission."⁵ The whole subject of compensation for professional services is one of extreme complexity. The law of supply and demand which governs the transactions of the market is wholly unsuitable in this field. The assumption is that men undertake their obligations to the public with single devotion to the public good, and in the main it is fair to record that the implications of true professionalism have been carefully observed by the great majority of practitioners. But codes and their sanctions are made for the recalcitrant members, not for the compliant citizen, and the effectiveness of the restraints depends not alone upon the coercions of the class but also upon the level of moral intelligence in the community. As long as men are willing to employ shyster lawyers and charlatan doctors to rescue them from prison or disease, codified rules and rigid etiquette cannot make the pernicious intruder sensible of his guilt. The public mind must be instructed in the meaning of jurisprudence and therapeutics, and taught to respect only such interpretations as accord with their inward meaning.

The vocational interests of adult behavior do not stand alone; they provide the means for satisfying the economic needs but do not touch some of the finer values which trained minds naturally seek to realize. Social clubs, fraternal orders, political parties, learned societies, are some of the agencies dealing with avocational interests. Each of these adopts articles of belief and courses of action which may or

⁵ C. E. Taeusch, "Professional and Business Ethics," p. 236,—a volume well worth reading.

may not conflict with the sanctions of sympathy. In one respect, the two sets of values seem to have different angles of approach. Business is a state of competition, the social circle a condition of coöperation; in the one, payment is made for services rendered; in the other, there is no payment. Friendship, culture, beneficial adjustments, even party allegiance at times, are at root values of the mind, not of the body. Hence, any participant in the associated rights who disobeys the official canons must suffer for his deed—reprimand, reduction in privileges, expulsion from the ranks. It is essential that the *esprit de corps* be rigidly maintained; for loyalty to the smaller group augurs intelligent adherence to the interests of the larger community. At the same time, no *imperium in imperio* can be allowed to form within the borders of the state or nation—no masked guilds, no leagues to enforce or destroy the intent of the Constitution, as in the earlier program of the Mormon church. For the nation is a reciprocating society, embracing coördinate interests under a common citizenship; hence, mutual trust and affiliated services must be exacted of all.

3. The Sympathetic Sanction and Its Adherent Virtues.

(a) It is an admitted principle of ethics that every social relation has its own adherent virtues. They will ordinarily be classified under the contributory values which conduct makes explicit in character; they will also be attended by their own defects, which we usually name vices. Honor is probably the most conspicuous in the positive list. It seems to mean conformity to the code of rules which govern men in their social contacts. We speak of the capable lawyer as being an *honor* to the bar; his talents, his devotion to the highest principles of his profession, his consideration of the interests of the public he serves, award him a place of distinction among his fellow practitioners that is freely acknowledged by competent observers. This is the objective significance of the word. There is also a subjective implication, a man's appraisement of his own fidelity to the cause

he represents. The solicitor is a man of honor because he scrupulously obeys the rules of moral worth in the discharge of his professional duties. He is not satisfied with a perfunctory and literal compliance with the terms of service—the mere etiquette of manners and customs. The casual spectator of an important court action fails to perceive beneath the balanced phrase and calm demeanor of the pleader the scars of a struggle against the temptation to sell his honor for large monetary emoluments. Perhaps in no other profession is the assault upon a man's sense of integrity so desperately hard, requiring courage of the highest order to withstand the insidious appeal. Careful discriminations of the most subtle sort are exacted of the conscientious attorney. It is one thing to accept a retainer in defense of a prisoner accused of murder, because the chain of evidence contains ambiguous elements which need to be cleared up before a true verdict can be taken, as seemed to be a fact in the celebrated Sacco-Vanzetti case tried before the Massachusetts courts between the years 1920 and 1927; it is quite another to attempt a subversion of the plain edicts of the law when the plea is backed by an affluent purse spread wide open to obtain a complete acquittal or, at worst, a diluted sentence, as in the Leopold-Loeb case before the Chicago bar. The moral mettle of the profession is tested by the choice, and honor is shown to be either an empty word or a powerful engine for good.

The potency of honor as a social sanction is one of the solid achievements of human morality. In the twilight zones of historical development it has saved man from reversion to his brutish prototypes. Chivalry registered the important principle of protection of the weak, and the consecration of the young knight's sword set him apart officially to this arduous task. Unfortunately, the safeguarding of one woman's virtue often involved the degradation of perhaps a score of others. But, at any rate, it signified the resolve of the race to recover, if possible, the moral equilibrium of earlier ages. Honor lays its binding force upon the most diverse groups. It gives to the soldier a sense of pride in his

arms and faith in his cause; it compels the mariner to subscribe to the "laws of the sea," dictating heroic deeds of great splendor—women and children saved first in moments of peril; the captain the last to leave the ship. Society ordinarily cherishes no vengeance against its weaker members, but it never forgives the craven seaman who flinches at his post. The social sanction will not be denied. On the other hand, society accepts with equanimity the discreet behavior of men who hold to the code of honor. It respects, for example, the fidelity of the priest in guarding the secrets of penitent souls which have been revealed in the confessional. It honors the physician who observes to the letter the terms of the Hippocratic Oath; it esteems and lauds the independence of the teacher who surrenders his position and his competence rather than become responsible for doctrines whose truth he cannot affirm. "That which is truly called honor," says Cicero, "is not the inducement entertained for the moment, but the reward of perpetual virtue."

But honor suffers by a tendency to excessive application, so that, when the medial line is overstepped, vice and not virtue may result. Men who engage in games of chance often put their gambling debts, "debts of honor," above the ordinary obligations to tradesmen. Such liabilities represent contests between men of equal social standing, and must therefore be first satisfied. To repudiate them means social disgrace, while to disregard the demands of inferiors is the right and sometimes the duty of a privileged citizen. The distinctions of class must be maintained at all hazards. But apart from the requirements of exact justice to all men, regardless of their social status, there is the additional consideration that games of chance are stage-plays and should never be allowed to extort one farthing from the substance which society amasses for its economic support. Honor does not consist in justifying the existence of secret vices. Nor does honor now permit the vindication of offended pride by a resort, for example, to the sword. The sovereignty of moral judgment cannot be restored by the physical disablement of an offender or the sacrifice of his life. Such an argu-

ment is the contention of a fanatic, and fanaticism is the derivative vice corresponding to the normal exercise of honor. Honor is a determinate form of sympathy, but when it is not subject to rational checks it is sure to terminate in hurt to the agent and disservice to the community. "The true fanatic," says Fowler, "is a man who can sympathize with no one whose opinions do not coincide with his own." The *honor* of the medieval church led to the iniquities of the Spanish *auto de fé*; the *honor* of the German Empire generated the extravagant claims of intellectual and political superiority, as noted in Chamberlain's "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century," and Bernhardt's "Germany and the Next War." Honor in excess carries the seeds of its own destruction.

(b) Courtesy is the second virtue characteristic of those closer relations which have coöperation and unrewarded service as their basic principles. It bears the stamp of the kingly court and presupposes a refined temper and cultivated manners suitable to the presence of princes of the blood. Loyalty to traditions, participation in the privileges of the group, are thought to create a strong bond of union quite different from mere community of residence or citizenship. Anglo-Saxon practice has associated this idea with the word "gentleman." In the English social system, the simple gentleman stood midway between the nobility and the yeomanry. He sprang from a race of freemen and celebrated the dignity of his descent by the symbols on his coat-of-arms. While he could not sit in the House of Lords as a peer of the realm, he was eligible to election to the lower House, and in fact contributed some of the most distinguished names in Britain's history to the roster of her statesmen. By virtue of his training and positive character, the term gentleman passed into the currency of a wider meaning. We now esteem that man intrinsically worthy of the name who recognizes the nobility of veracious thought and honest action both in himself and in others, and who expects and wills to perform his duties without reservation or deduction. The "courtesy of a gentleman" is a guaranty of honor-

able dealing and sympathetic understanding. It advises us that men may meet the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" and remain unperturbed by their threat. Fowler suggests that courtesy implies the voluntary surrender of personal rights, for the time being and in the "minor circumstances" of life. Sir Walter Raleigh spread his garment before the feet of his Queen with the studied art of the courtier; it was also the act of human sympathy, the sure sign that he was not guilty of what Adam Smith calls "mental mutilation," but was possessed rather of such native kindliness that he would serve her humblest subject as well as Elizabeth herself. Courtesy, like honor, presupposes the presence of equals in its original usage; when its application is extended to types divergent in temper and inferior in experience, the strain of a martyr is oftentimes imposed on the man of moral fidelity.

But, like honor, courtesy too has the defects of its quality. Strange to say, it is apt to be divisive in its effects. For courtesy tends to return to type, that is, to an exclusive form of expression: those persons belonging to our class are the sole objects worthy of attention. Galsworthy in his "Forsyte Saga" has satirized the pretensions of the upper middle class, the group that possesses no peculiar legal status and puts in its place the apotheosis of gold. It is well known that university circles in England and America—the haunts of the *cognoscenti* and *dilletanti*—have wrapped their language and demeanor in distinctive forms which the townsman can neither apprehend nor understand. Fortunately, the new contacts with business, politics, social welfare, and practical science are slowly obliterating the specious marks of caste and establishing a rapport which augurs well for the future influence of collegiate training. It is notorious that religious communions have deliberately, as though by *malice prepense*, converted Christian courtesy into venomous discriminations, even making ecclesiastical regularity the mark of social preferment. Political parties assert their right to be regarded as the exclusive source of economic success, discrediting the intelligence, character,

and constructive aims of their opponents. Exclusiveness is a virtue only when it excludes the dishonest man and the fakir; but when it decries the achievements of other and sometimes better men, it becomes a vicious and iniquitous property—not only a vice, but a nuisance. Bain has put the case with bald exactness: “The dignity attached to the military profession and the indignity of the office of public executioner are capricious, arbitrary, and sentimental.”⁶ It is difficult to discover the mintage of courtesy in the debased coin of exclusiveness, yet, unhappily, they go back to the same mental impulse. If we show favor to some, we automatically exclude others. The lesson is plain: equality as a moral axiom takes precedence over every subsidiary virtue; by it as a touchstone we must test the value of all proposed actions.

4. Shame as the Internal Sanction.

The sympathetic sanctions we have so far analyzed exhibit an objective character; they express either the praise or blame, the approval or disapproval, of our associates; they represent the collective feelings of a particular group made effective in pleasing or painful ways; for example, the elevation to headship on the one hand or outspoken criticism on the other. It is doubtful, however, whether the objective forms of the sanction would exert a permanent influence on the offending member if it were not reënforced by the internal revulsion commonly called *shame*. Penologists assure us that penitentiary cases become the more difficult of handling, the more callous the misdemeanant is towards the opinions of society. Pedagogues aim to awaken the sense of shame in their pupils at the earliest available moment, being aware that precepts in morality are of small value except when supported by the conviction that we have transgressed the rules of order and ought to feel sorrow for our action. Whether or not the human mind is aroused by formal discipline to an appreciation of moral

⁶ “Mental and Moral Science,” p. 438.

failure, the facts of experience in civilized countries are quite clear: shame is a powerful instrument for the preservation of the social status. No historian of his own career can escape recording one or more incidents when the violation of a social norm laid him open to ridicule, contempt, or public reprimand. Which of these conditions is the hardest to bear depends upon the disposition of the subject. Hawthorne has depicted the force of the condemnatory feeling in his "Scarlet Letter." But causes of more trivial content may excite as violent a reaction. To mispronounce a word, to use the wrong spoon at a polite table, to address an acquaintance by an improper title, to salute cordially a passerby who happens to be entirely unknown to the speaker—these small and trifling events throw at least the youthful mind into a turmoil of confusion and often bring the telltale blush to the cheek. However we may explain man's submission to social rule, when one of its commands is broken our own consciousness registers its certain reprobation.

What, then, does shame signify in moral behavior? To writers like Butler, it serves as the agent of conscience to prevent the performance of dishonorable acts.⁷ To others, like John Grote, it is equivalent to moral fear; it is connected with definite physical instincts and is designed to keep their purposes intact.⁸ But Grote is surely mistaken in restricting the application of the term. The modern interpretation as stated by McDougall seems to come nearer to the truth. Shame is the sentiment which tells us that we failed to make the desired impression on our neighbors.⁹ It is akin to revenge in that both emotions proclaim the futility of human effort in attaining a given end. Revenge is the impassioned retort to a positive injury; shame is the retort we make to ourselves for some objectified deficiency which lowers us in the eyes of our colleagues. Shame is therefore a recoil from the rejected proffer of *sympathy*; it is a confession that we did not understand the full import of the laws governing

⁷ "Sermons," II.

⁸ "Moral Ideals," p. 167.

⁹ "Social Psychology," Ch. 5.

association when we declined to comply with their terms. The pain of isolation which results is one of the attending restraints that aggravate the sense of failure. This is essentially different from an intended defiance of custom, the assertion of independence—*Athanasius contra mundum*. It may be admitted that wide experience, repeated contests with the baffling currents of social life, the development of a private creed which does not require the consent of our neighbors, will neutralize the sting of repulse and make shame a less frequent emotion in the behavior of the adult man.

But the more usual course is for the afflicted soul to draw in its antennæ like a disturbed creature and retire into seclusion. In some cases shame settles into morbid rancor, affecting all future decisions in social matters. The acrid language of a Voltaire is the natural medium of such a feeling, the recriminations of a brilliant intellect against the misjudgments of his contemporaries. It may be said that the great satirist had none of the emotional revulsion which we call shame. For shame comes only when we recognize the superiority of our censor, and Voltaire acknowledged the right of no man to criticize his habits or his thought. We can, however, detect the outcroppings of a negative self-feeling in his escape from an unsympathetic environment by taking up his residence among peoples other than his own. On the other hand, those cases of shame prove to be most beneficent which compel the mind to examine its intrinsic powers, to ascertain the points where failure is most acute, and then to take steps to rectify the mistakes by beginning again the organization of a constructive moral program in the same conditions. Shame is not the index of defeat; it is rather nature's warning of the miscarriage of her plans.

We have had occasion to argue that an harmonious character is the scientifically determined end of all behavior. Since character can only be harmonious when its several emotions discharge their functions adequately, we may conclude that the business of ethics is to discover, first, what

causes will induce the action of shame; and, secondly, how the emotion may be used to develop satisfactory moral conduct. The latter question in its objective form will be treated more fully in the next chapter. The former may be answered by saying that no man should allow himself to entertain a feeling of abasement in the presence of events over which he has no control—his race, his parentage, his birthplace, his family traditions, his personal appearance, his early training, his economic status on reaching years of independent action. For these things we need not apologize; an apologetic attitude is a total misapprehension of the value of the given emotion. It is our duty to find out what objects normally stimulate the operation of the sanction. Are these objects under our direct control? For example, is anger a governable state of mind? It is on record that men yield to its urgency and then regret their haste. Obviously, this is a condition that deserves the careful study of the rational agent. Moral instruction must aim to extend the boundaries of control so that when the sanction of shame is applied we may recognize its validity and accept its terms as a veridical guide to action.

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CHAPTER III

REPUTATION

1. Isolation an Impossible Human Status.

We have taken it as an axiom of conduct that no man can rid himself of the company of his neighbor. The Stoic's attempt to set the soul in an insulated area untouched by the currents of social or political thought was doomed to failure. The pages of history are filled with schemes for the consolidation of particular interests into a distinct community—a Pantisocracy, a Utopia, a Brook Farm—all of them proving to be without the necessary power to live. Viability does not depend on scientific formula, but on the essential properties of the organic body. It is no doubt true that the experience of isolation is often needed to inculcate in men's minds the purpose and scope of social responsibility. The principle has been concisely stated by Dostoevsky:

For everyone strives to keep his individuality as apart as possible, wishes to secure the greatest possible fullness of life for himself; but meanwhile all his efforts result not in attaining fullness of life but self-destruction; for instead of self-realization he ends by arriving at complete solitude.¹

But when a man or nation reaches such an abnormal status, the conviction emerges that it is not authoritative or final. This observer of Russian society argues that the "terrible individualism" of his day could not persist. Both the passion for personal spiritualization and the desire for private economic stability will inevitably melt away in the under-

¹ "The Brothers Karamazov," trans. by Constance Garnett, Vol. I, p. 313.

standing that men are bound by nature into a social whole. Hence, any attempt by the individual to administer the laws of the group for his own benefit must fail. Murder for revenge leaves its indelible print upon the mind, as is attested by the career of Father Zossima's first penitent. Philanthropy, a happy marriage, devotion to family, cannot remove the cankerous sore; he must confess, first to one who seemed to understand, then to the skeptical public which took his confession to be that of a madman. Mental isolation is a false and impossible attitude.²

The deduction which Dostoevsky wishes to draw is that human consciousness and the social group have ordained a sanction which cannot be lightly set aside. Its commands may be divided into two kinds, those that guide the objective career of its individual agents and those that symbolize the will of the group as expressed in custom, convention, and social technique. Bentham calls the one the sanction of amity; the other, the sanction of reputation. It is the desire for reputation that cements most closely the relations of men to one another. "There is no human being, perhaps," says this author, "on whom considerations of this sort have not some weight; they have the more weight upon a man in proportion to the strength of his intellectual powers and the firmness of his mind."³ "Firmness of mind" means one's ability to reject the fascinations of smaller or nearer pains or pleasures in favor of those objects which possess permanent value. No man can obtain a suitable fulfillment of his secondary desires, for example, economic rewards or political preferment, except by giving attention to the kind of reaction evoked in his neighbor's mind by his specific behavior. Such modes of response become established usages. In our examination of Hobbes' theory, it was hinted that no custom is ever arbitrarily chosen and imposed upon the group; it grows by the slow accumulations of time and the subtle changes in human feelings. Habits cannot be

² The story will be found in "The Brothers Karamazov," Vol. I, p. 311, *et seq.*

³ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 10.

private in content or execution; they impinge at once on social experience. Hence, due respect must be paid to their formation and substance. Those that give pain to one or more persons will meet with protest and rebuff; those that give pleasure, with agreement and imitation. The real test, however, is not the quantity of satisfactory feeling but the value of behavior to the activity of the group. Now, since not even a single type of habitual action can be undertaken without affecting the interests of other human beings, it follows that we are obliged to consult external opinion in support of our projected aims. Ethics must study the concept of reputation as a fixed incentive to virtuous conduct. A careful analysis of its demands will determine the futility of the policy of isolation as a principle of moral development.

2. Reputation as a Repressive Sanction.

The property of conservatism is one of the strongest forces at work in civilized communities. It is reflected in the tenacity with which men cling to the body of traditional beliefs, in the resentment felt against any intruding and conflicting theory, in the energy expended in communicating the meaning of accepted concepts to the new generation. Conservatism seems almost like a resident law of nature. It suggests the uniformity of biologic types, which change their form and structure only after the most stubborn resistance. Hence, change lingers in the lap of permanence, and the paradox which Heraclitus taught is a true maxim of science. Likewise, the endemic quality of certain social customs, like the exposure of infants or the instruction of youth in the arts of theft, is an impressive instance of conservatism. Each of them leads back inevitably to the fundamental axiom of economics, that population is determined by the margin of subsistence. If additional food is needed beyond what the local territory supplies, the craft of the trained citizen will add to the store from a neighbor's abundance.

In view of acknowledged facts like these, we may safely assume that (a) regularity in social demeanor must be exacted of every member of the group and that (b) appropriate penalties will be prescribed for the infraction of the rules.

(a) How, then, has society organized its system of rules? The provisions begin with the most ordinary concerns of living—what men should eat, what they should wear, how they should be housed. It is only the daring of some quixotic temper that could persuade a man to parade the crowded thoroughfares of a great city clothed in the toga of ancient Rome or the cloak of an oriental sheik. Fashion has converted uniformity into an instrument of coercion, and, while she changes her decrees with the seasons, her authority is never questioned. Disobedience opens a Pandora's box of troubles for the offender. The more serious social functions are bound by the same regularity. Thus, monogamous marriage has been adopted as the only valid status for the begetting of children and the safeguarding of property rights. So strong, so insistent, is the sanction of custom here that rigorous disabilities are meted out to men and women, especially women, who presume to violate its terms. Apart from the obvious disapproval which the social group expresses (a condition which Hardy describes with great vividness in "Jude the Obscure"), there are permanent consequences of grave significance: the stigma of illegitimacy, the refusal of a legal name, the state's reluctance to recognize inheritance except by specific bequest. Critics have asked whether conservatism has not defeated its own purposes by its obduracy in resisting a more generous interpretation of custom. Sentimentalists have pointed to the agonies endured by sensitive minds in their efforts to remove the stigma. But the tabu is effectually set, and the meaning of marriage must be changed before its form will be altered. The solidarity of the race depends on the purity of its blood; hence, no pains are too great to be taken to effect that end. Conformity to this elementary rule is the first method of establishing moral obligation in society.

A similar tenacity of purpose is found in many political customs. It is true that sudden changes have occurred in the governmental structure of certain peoples, leading the casual observer to conclude that the mechanics of control may be readily revised. Thus, Russia passes from the status of a benevolent despotism to an extreme system of economic communism. Destroy the symbols of imperial rule and set up the principle of occupational suffrage, with common ownership of land and instruments of production, and you have a totally new scheme of administration. But, in the given instance, two considerations must be borne in mind; first, that the organization of an autocratic state is notoriously loose and therefore easily superseded; and secondly, that the two forms of government are essentially alike in spirit—orders proceed “from the top” and are implicitly obeyed by the citizenry. The persistence of political ideas must be tested by the kind of protest attending the proclamation of alternative theories. Here again the innovator is suspect in the opinion of the masses. It may sometimes be as much as a man’s life is worth to propose, for example, a revision of the legislative machinery of a nation; and only when the proposal becomes the slogan of a powerful party within the state does the odor of disrepute pass from the proposer’s person. The House of Lords in England has been variously attacked as the seat of tyranny, the center of reactionary dogmas, the barrier to true social progress. Those who have championed revolutionary measures affecting its function and position have truly had to take their courage in their hands; they inevitably suffer in credit and influence, except when, as in 1906, the hand of Liberalism was on the helm and actually wrested important prerogatives from the keeping of the House. But, for the most part, the sanction of conformity has met the iconoclast in deadly encounter and made good its claims. Approbation changes its substance only under the greatest pressure.

(b) Granting that the social judgment resists infringement on its vested rights, we next inquire what sort of sanction will express the feeling of the social unit in given con-

ditions. A sanction in ethics, we said, may be either negative or positive, pleasurable or painful, and both are capable of strengthening moral purpose in critical moments. Consider the sagacious words of Bishop Butler:

Throw off all regards for others, and we should be quite indifferent to infamy and to honor; there could be no such thing as ambition, and scarce any such thing as covetousness. . . . Let it not be taken for granted that the temper of envy, rage, resentment, yields greater delight than meekness, forgiveness, compassion, and goodwill . . . that the satisfaction arising from the reputation of riches and power, however obtained, is greater than the satisfaction arising from the reputation of justice, honesty, charity.⁴

The abrupt distinction excites attention. Is it true that society cordially acclaims the pursuit of moral virtue, the public-spirited endeavor, the sacrifice of external fortune for the preservation of an unblemished record; while it soft-pedals the efforts of cynical citizens to possess themselves, in perpetuity, of the nation's coal-beds, oil-deposits, utility privileges? Has American sentiment, in company with the best judgment of modern thought, officially accepted the decree of Butler that reputation for just conduct is *at least* equal in social value to the reputation for administrative skill or managerial efficiency, supposing that it is possible to find in them some inherent contradiction? Has society ever, in an evangelical mood, admitted that the honest man carries greater weight in political decisions than the rich and prosperous man? Certainly the distinction is arresting. To praise means to assent to the type of behavior eliciting the praise. The social mind, it is well known, is swayed by emotions; one day it will commend the zeal of the moral dialectician, the next it will hand him the cup of hemlock as a penalty for corrupting youth. The sanction of approval is applied in an impartial and unbiased manner only with the greatest difficulty. Men profess to esteem the reputation for justice, but behave as though it stood last in the list of desired goods. Hence, the positive values of this

⁴ "Sermons," II.

sanction are ambiguous and do not give the moral impetus that we might normally expect from it.

The opposing sanction is clearer; it has the vigor of particularity. We have already noted that the civil law confines its compensations to this type. Government deals with the instruments of condemnation; it has nothing but words (and few of them) for men of acknowledged rectitude. Furthermore, action is single and concrete; it is the response to specific violations of custom; hence, it is peculiarly personal. Society makes guilt individual, not collective; "it is impossible," said Burke, "to indict a nation." It has fashioned a term to suit the behavior; man is *blamed* for his erroneous judgment and errant act. It happens not infrequently that the misdemeanant fails to understand the gravity of his conduct. Assuming that he can distinguish between his own procedure and the customary procedure of the group, the fault seems to lie in a deficient moral sensitiveness. A most persistent variety of this fault is that attitude of mind which cannot, or refuses to, distinguish between friendly assistance and the dishonest substitution of one man's efforts for another's. Scholastic authorities are forced to deal continually with situations which to the trained intelligence are as clear as daylight but to an untutored mind are obfuscated by a hundred conflicting motives. The problem is not one of logic but of sheer moral emotion. Scholarship demands integrity of thought, and integrity of thought means that every student is responsible for his own creations. Hence, in the formative period of youth, exact and sustained discipline must be applied, in order to instill the idea of blameworthiness as a check upon recalcitrancy. Society owes it to its own safety, as well as to the character of its citizenship, that every member should understand the principle of accountability. Without it, moral values cannot be maintained.

To reach this end, experience has devised an effective implement which we now call *publicity*. It recognizes the fact that every individual moral action has its repercussions in the wider ranges of communal thought. Hence, when a

prescribed rule of conduct has been violated, either with or without an appreciation of the seriousness of the situation, it is the plain duty of the group to make known the nature of the act and its influence upon the ideals and purposes which are held in common. The vices of secret diplomacy consist largely in the chance that unworthy incentives may enter by subterranean channels into important decisions of state. The social sanction requires an open discussion of the issues at stake. Bentham argues that the indignation aroused against a particular opinion will be "the more formidable according to the number who join in it,"⁵ that is, in proportion to the amount and thoroughness of the publicity given to the case. There is always, to be sure, the possibility that indignation, which is strong and communicable in the abstract, will be thwarted by the cross-currents of private sentiment and public policy; we condemn dishonesty as a general proposition, but we are inclined to obstruct the operation of the sanction in the present instance. "No man," says Fowler, "except under the most extreme circumstances would prosecute his wife or his father or his mother for the commission of a theft." Still, the candid publication of the facts, even though it bring a momentary check to pride or affection, will give synthetic force to the feeling of blame as one of the curative elements in the field of social pathology.

One further question remains: Suppose the sanction of blame is wrongly placed; does the moral agent possess the authority and right to reject the imputation and affirm his individual rectitude? May a man's independent judgment be constitutionally set against a public decision which tends to impair his personal repute and injure his future career? Bentham will not go so far as some of his contemporaries in defining reputation as an "object of property," which is specifically guaranteed to the citizen by due process of law; but if property "implies invariably a benefit, and nothing else," then a man's standing in the community is essentially

⁵ "Morals and Legislation," Ch. 12, Sec. 1.

a possession which he may seek by every legitimate means to safeguard and promote.⁶ Hence, any attempt to lower a neighbor's credit in the eyes of his associates is a plain offense against his person, though he suffer no calculable diminution of health or treasure. The sentiment of the cultivated mind is reflected in the familiar words of Iago:

Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls;
Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed.

Especially is a man justified in resenting the stigma set upon his public credit when no attempt has been made to analyze his motives or the conditions under which the act is performed. It is easy enough to say that he is seeking a "place in the sun" or that he is striving to wreak vengeance upon a coterie he dislikes or that his views are fanatic and should be suppressed. The plain fact is that he has deliberately cut across the approved opinion of his group. A protagonist like William Lloyd Garrison believes profoundly in the justice of his own cause and defends its terms against the bitter opposition of interested parties. He is charged with assaulting one of the historic institutions of the land; he might not derive pecuniary profit from his crusade, but he could lift the economic status of his own section by destroying the prosperity of another. Hence, sentiment and self-interest rise in revolt against his insinuations and resort to physical force in order to check the progress of the campaign in favor of emancipation. It may be said that men do not stop to examine the motives of the enemy when the battle is impending; they seek only the initial advantage of attack. But battle is the end of discussion, not its beginning. The social sanction is not a hammer of revenge, nor

⁶ *Ibid.*, Ch. 6, Sec. 26.

is it merely the instrument of coercion. Sanction is the ultimate unit in the social series, to be applied only when due respect has been paid to the essential factors in the case. It assumes that an established institution has some vigorous arguments that may be cited in its support. Slavery stood for uncounted generations as a serviceable form of social relationship. It was a fertile source of revenue, and would not surrender its privileged position at the call of an impetuous reformer. Furthermore, it created an emotional atmosphere thoroughly hostile to the principles of abolitionism. It was therefore to be expected that, when criticism fell upon it, conflict would inevitably ensue, and the man or men who made the criticism would meet the sternest kind of reprobation. Hence, Garrison stands for a type: he feels the keen edge of the sanction, but by his and others' efforts turns the negative sanction into a warrant for the validity of his cause.

3. Reputation as an Impelling Sanction.

The first aspect of the social sanction is repressive; it shows how moral behavior is interpreted by the group in terms of assent or dissent. It represents the agent as confronting the serried ranks of custom without knowing what his reception will be—friendly or hostile. His attitude must be represented as largely passive; it is a matter of likes and dislikes, attractions and repulsions. The primary factors are psychological—the play of emotions, like revenge; the operation of derivative sentiments, like loyalty. Even when men are forced to meet the antagonistic strain of public disapproval, the antipathy is mainly impulsive; it yields or resists according to the comparative measure of strength of the contending parties. But in the course of time a new temper arises; men begin to justify their trespass upon forbidden ground; in particular, they seek to expound the virtues of their cause and perhaps the weakness of their opponent's.

The innovator is at the start on the defensive; he is

persona non grata to the ruling class; not a social pariah, for the opposition admits the interesting character of a contrary program when pushed with vigor and belief, but a man of quality who requires to be shown the "error of his way." John Wycliffe could not fail to arrest the attention of the leaders of English thought, although they might regard his teachings as pernicious and his person as impertinent. He might have been accused of seeking recognition for his natural gifts and intellectual achievements. The fact was that Wycliffe and his generation did not agree upon the ultimate canons of worth. Hence, being in a hopeless minority—one against all—he was bound to bear the weight of contemporary reprehension. They blamed him for awarding to the civil state the control of the temporalities of the church; they charged him with holding heretical beliefs, such as a denial of the doctrine of transubstantiation. In their zeal for the hereditary creed, they did not see that he stood for the ancient British right of untrammelled judgment, a judgment formulated neither by a vicarious priest nor an approved social mentor. The point we should stress is that positive repute begins with a conscious agreement or conflict between associated minds; on the one side, an organized emotional complex, on the other, a tendency to accept or disregard its commands.

But the sanction assumes a new aspect when men determine to create for themselves a favorable impression within their immediate environment. The sanction is now affirmative; it has been gripped by the hand of resolute endeavor and turned into an instrument of social prestige. We may warn the reader again not to interpret the sanction as a crude utilitarian motive; the emphasis lies not on the pleasure to be derived but on the quality of the character to be presented to the social group for appraisement. Character cannot be truly shaped except with the auxiliary urge of a neighbor's commendation. We must therefore discriminate moral values from those which intellect or emotion dictate—the values of truth and beauty. Plato has described the contrast in unforgettable language. He assumes that

every human being can attain proficiency in technical skill and excellence in moral behavior. But the successful craftsman is not necessarily a paragon of moral virtue; the virtuous agent is not *ipso facto* triumphant in the practice of the arts. It is frequently taken for granted that the man of high intelligence will invariably choose the path of honor; the facts of history are against the claim. The objects in view are different and the manner of approach must differ too. In the arts and crafts, we seek *distinction*; in the pursuit of moral ideals, *reputation*. Let us examine the two ideas.

Modern thinkers have separated love of distinction from love of reputation. The pugilist trains for eminent craftsmanship in the use of his physical powers. He desires to excel, and excelling means to defeat his competitor in the fair tourney of contest in compliance with recognized rules. There is distinction to be won, but no reputation. Distinction presupposes a comparison of qualities and achievements and the public admission of one man's superiority over another. Reputation involves both a comparison of conduct or judgment with the established canons of the group and a deliberate imposition of praise or blame. Hence, we should not say of a statesman that he possesses a good reputation if we are evaluating his skill in the handling of the complicated problems of government. If, on the other hand, we refer to his rigorous application to duty, his loyalty to the highest interests of the state, his sacrifice of opportunities for extending his private fortunes in order that the public business may be honestly transacted, then we may freely call him a man of excellent repute. Most citizens do not feel intense chagrin if they fail to achieve distinction in one field or another, but it is difficult to conceive of any citizen of sound judgment and moral sensitiveness who does not fear to be written down as a man of "no reputation." The negative phrase has positive content; custom has standardized its meaning, as can be seen in the opprobrious title "a man of evil reputation." It is true that we speak of men as attaining "an unenviable distinc-

tion;" but here we have specialized the application of the term to the facts of moral behavior, not of intellectual activity. The point seems to be plain that reputation expresses the attitude of the public towards the moral habits of the citizen, carrying with it in every case the note of approval or reprobation. Hence, we may pass by a person of small intellectual or æsthetic accomplishments without remark, but we never excuse or defend a man who boasts of the low regard in which he is held by his fellows; at the same time, we extol the virtues of one who devotes himself unselfishly to the public service. It follows that the pursuit of stainless reputation is the compelling duty of virtuous men in a highly moralized society. This is the significance of the social sanction in its affirmative form.

There is, however, an important caution to observe if we would escape the tragic mistake of confusing appearance and reality. The solid substance behind the claims to distinction can be tested in the crucible of experimental analysis. We may examine, for instance, the achievements of the scholar as embodied in his published works and determine whether or not he merits recognition. Time, if not contemporary opinion, will submit the policies of a government official to a searching scrutiny and fix his place in the ranks of public servants. The standard of excellence in these cases is objective. Genius is a natural gift which men must have in order to use, and, having not, are under no constraint to lament its lack. But moral character is a different sort of value. It depends upon organic endowments for its foundation, but rises above the common reactions to sense stimuli and adopts a form of behavior whose essential element is choice. A man may choose to be honest, but he cannot choose to possess the genius of an artist. Genius in design is a native talent; character in its later phases is the conscious production of will. For this reason the public interpretation of character is qualified and sometimes untrue. The subject cannot always express in exact behavior the intrinsic virtues he is striving to cultivate. Moreover, the judgment which goes into the body of a

reputation is not that of the subject but of his observing neighbor. Such judgment is composed of a variety of factors, both appreciative and critical, both expert and casual. The average reputation is never examined in the same way as the claims of scientist or statesman. It does not represent a careful analysis of motive and intent, with a comparison of present and past performances. It is a chemical solution in which seemingly diverse elements are strangely merged. Hence, reputation may be but a faint replica of the actual character. Honesty may be "indicated" on the surface, while the dominant purposes are malignant denials of truth and honor. The tale is painful, and we need not pursue its ignominious course. It becomes more ignoble when the agent deliberately conceals the facts and attempts to build for himself a public respect which contradicts his ruling motives. The discrepancy is bound to be revealed in life or in death, and public confidence in private virtue is thereby oftentimes shaken to its center.

4. Fame as Moral Motive.

The desire for fame rests upon an altogether different basis. It is historically correct to say that many of the notable names on the roll of fame were placed there by no direct effort of their bearers; they "awoke one morning and found themselves famous." But neither Byron in letters nor Wellington in war was without a secret passion for public recognition. It is no reflection on their characters that the "insatiable craving for fame" was one of their incentives to service. Fame is a justifiable motive in moral endeavor. It carries the sphere of action beyond the petty criticisms of one's own time and place and accepts the test of different canons of judgment for the final estimate. For this reason, the appeal to the verdict of the future is entirely warranted; the perspective widens with completer understanding of the proven values of character. Personality grows with the extension of its influence. To be sure, as Carlyle said about Goethe, fame is "no sure test of merit,

but only a probability of such; it is an accident, not a property of a man." Many a "mute inglorious Milton" lies buried in the country churchyard; many an "unknown soldier" passes to his account without knowledge of the stately cenotaph erected in his honor. But while merit goes unrewarded because the conditions of the time did not elicit the full strength of character or ability, that fact should not deter us from ascribing an adequate meed of praise to those who, through toil and consecration, force their claims to recognition upon sometimes reluctant contemporaries. Certainly, when in the classic period of Roman genius men resolutely set out to engrave their thoughts and deeds upon the critical judgment and plastic sympathy of future esteem, they may properly be said to have fulfilled the moral significance of Cicero's question: "Do you think I should have undertaken such heavy labors by day and by night, at home and abroad, if I had believed the term of my earthly life would mark the limits of my fame?"¹

We may agree, then, that the pursuit of fame is an intelligent appreciation of one of the foremost sanctions of ethics. But what is the content of the desired end? Let us reject the notion that fame may be expressed in the notoriety of the moment. Newspaper acclaim, the reverberations of the radio, political prominence, are ephemeral forms of recognition. Disraeli has described the morbid eagerness of a young French author, in the appalling reign of the Commune, to have his name in every man's mouth as the provisioner of new ideas, the possible creator of a revised social system. But celebrity of this sort dies with the effort to win it. Fame has the temper of perpetuity. But fame must limit its range of application. The quest for fame cannot include the desire to be regarded as a man of superior moral stamina, though a man of such character may incidentally achieve fame. Reputation, we said, deals with character; fame deals with the natural powers of the mind. The man who seeks to extend the field of recognition

¹"De Senectute," Loeb Classical Library, p. 93.

for his virtues and their grandeur will end in moral eclipse. Francis of Assisi was a sainted monk, but his fame rests on the sermons he preached, the churches he organized, and the monastic order which he founded. These are achievements of the mind, and from them arises his praise. Fame is not concerned at first with celebrating the depth and beauty of his integrity. The fame of Dante, of Velasquez, of Washington, bespeaks the possession of superior gifts of intellect rather than of moral worth. Men of ignoble motives may rise to pinnacles of fame, although, we may admit, posterity likes to have its heroes clothed in the garments of translucent virtue. When honorable character and brilliant genius unite in the splendor of a single personality, then reverence as well as admiration stirs the waiting soul to emulation. When, on the other hand, meanness of spirit or base cruelty of deeds stains the demeanor of the hero, such as Homer seems to delight in attributing to his leading characters, then history must exercise divine patience in disentangling the bad from the good, to the end that the opprobrium of the present may not interfere with the final estimate which time and moral evolution shall award to the truly valued life.

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CHAPTER IV

CONSCIENCE

It is the contention of certain writers on ethics that sanctions can be of a public nature only; they must be supported and enforced by the united judgment of a social group, else we can have no assurance that they will ever become effective. The objective symbols of disapproval have been noticed in the preceding chapters. No doubt exists in the mind of the careful student that moral vagrancies of the most serious sort are checked and sometimes completely thwarted by the application of the penalties of ostracism or social reprehension. It matters little whether reputation is a native appetite that seeks satisfaction in the good will of one's fellows, or whether the heavy hand of repression has driven men to shield themselves from injury by consciously cultivating the esteem of neighbor or business associate. The sanction is weighted with a compelling appeal.

In the light of these facts, it seems to be taken for granted by Bentham that moral sentiment, when properly understood, considers exclusively the opinions and feelings of the group, since—except in rare cases, such as religious fanatics—no damage can be inflicted on the person or strictures imposed on the mind other than by instruments of recognized authority within a given area. There is therefore no room for private sanctions; personal experience simply repeats the behavior of the mass. Men are integers in the structure of the state, nothing more; and its laws written in statutes and customs are binding upon all private and public actions. Blame is always a social edict, shame a social emotion.

But a large coterie of practical thinkers have vigorously

dissented from this conclusion. They refuse to believe that the individual agent cannot construct for himself an independent judgment when occasion requires and initiate for himself an independent control of conduct. The grounds for this attitude we have already examined¹ and adopted its general principle. There is not a shred of evidence to prove that my momentary dissatisfaction with a particular type of behavior is a direct reflection of the expressed or unexpressed censure of a friend or a recoil from the threat of social condemnation. Viewed as my own possession, it is an insulated fact known only to me in the sanctuary of conscience and, let us assume, wholly beyond the observation of my most intimate companion. In the case of extremely sensitive natures, the inciting cause may be a type of thought which, if revealed, would provoke a smile of indulgence from the public rather than a frown of disfavor, but which by its own weight forces the penitent soul into the throes of moral distress. On the other hand, if the deed has incurred the authentic reproaches of the group and brought shame and disgrace upon the doer, even under such conditions, the rebuke must be regarded as a private verdict rendered by a self-discriminating mind against its own behavior.

Shakespeare has analyzed such a situation with dramatic skill and spiritual insight. He refutes the dogma later espoused by Bentham as a scientific concept by citing the inescapable laws of psychology. With consummate skill, he exposes to the irony of the world the "coward conscience" of Richard the Third, who has slain the King, the King's son, the Princes in the tower, and, finally, the Duke of Buckingham, his own protector. Conscience is not a mirror of the sentiment of his entourage; it is the summons of a moral intelligence that at length apprehends the miscreancy of its act. The light burns blue, and in the dead midnight cold dreadful drops stand on his trembling flesh. Disapproval may indeed be born of fear, the foreshadowing of the flash of the avenging dagger; it may carry but a faint

¹ Pt. III, Ch. 2.

modicum of regret, none of remorse; yet the agony of a dishonored soul cries out in the memorable words:

My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.

Certainly the analysis of the great psychologist effectually disproves the thesis that the sanctions of ethics are wholly external.

1. Status of Conscience as Sanction: (a) Its Function.

We accept the testimony of experience that a constraining moral force exists in consciousness, and proceed to examine its function and form. To Bishop Butler, more than to any other modern thinker, is due the explicit definition of conscience as a single faculty capable of coercing men into the paths of honor and chastising them when they fail to obey. He insists that this faculty belongs to the "make, constitution, and nature" of the man, that it "magisterially exerts itself and approves and condemns him," that it acts therefore as the "supreme principle of reflection," proclaiming itself the "guide assigned us by the Author of our being." Conscience, in this philosophy, is the integrating factor in all behavior. It resembles the sovereign majesty of civil government in that it combines into an organic whole the centrifugal purposes of the people governed, that is, by a system of law and administration awarding here preferment, there condign punishment. Or again, it resembles the unity of a living body, for example, a tree whose roots, trunk, branches, fruit, and flower are sustained by a common vitalizing fluid, which is the symbol of a complete organic system. Destroy any of its parts and you destroy both the life of the tree and its very *idea*. In like manner the several passions, impulses, sentiments, convictions, of men have different "proportions," that is, phases of existence, but all are subject to a common control. The

supremacy of the conscience renders each proportion "just and perfect." No passion like anger, no sentiment like disloyalty, can gain the upper hand so long as conscience is allowed to rule. In short, man's moral destiny is placed squarely in the keeping of a single power which accepts advice, suggestion, command, from no extraneous quarters, but works its own authoritative will. Its right to rule is based upon his proprietorship in the "rule of right." The individual is his own judge.²

Against this atomistic theory of conscience, we may set another doctrine of entirely different content. Mr. B. M. Laing, in a work already referred to, defends the thesis that "when people act morally or immorally, the basis of action in either case is alike in the nature of conditions." This contradicts in part the principle supported in the present volume, namely, that the moral value of a deed depends both upon the internal motive and man's interpretation of the outward facts.³ Laing argues his case from the standpoint of scientific induction. Motives, when viewed as mental concepts, are withdrawn from the arena of practical conflict and lack the vigor of compulsion in getting their values converted into moral behavior. Thus, falsehood in social intercourse cannot be accounted for on the ground of a concrete incentive, for example, to make money. The habits of other men who are actuated by the same motives are diametrically opposite; they do not steal to get their ends. The solution of the problem lies, he thinks, in the nature and intensity of the immediate stimuli.

An animal when threatened with danger may first take to flight, then hide, then fight; the change in the action follows upon a change in the situation or conditions; the nature of the conditions provides the stimulus, and with a change of conditions there occurs a change of stimulus.⁴

² Butler's "Sermons," II and III.

³ Pt. II, Ch. 8.

⁴ "A Study in Moral Problems," p. 180.

The analogy is exact. If riches are to be won, men must sometimes be easy with their notions of honesty, although instances will occur where the current rules of veracity may be literally observed. But the determining factor is never the abstract principle of right, the inner personal quality which Butler calls conscience and others call moral sense; it is the "objective quality of conditions."

It is doubtful, then, (though Laing does not admit it) whether on his assumption moral responsibility can have any considerable place in human values. If his contention be granted, we shall have great difficulty in discovering which behavior shall be appraised as moral and which as mere sensory reaction. If some acts be finally appraised as moral, can they be moral in the usual sense, namely, that men deliberately seek to tell the truth because truth-telling conforms to their ideas of good character? On Laing's theory, ethics is a severely scientific program; it requires men to know "how to control causal processes" which they have no part in creating. Certain social situations may be allowed to be beyond our control, even beyond our foresight—poverty and its pathos, periodic economic crises, the unequal distribution of wealth, the insecurity of the worker in the mechanized industrial system of the present day. These and other conditions, it is contended, determine and operate the sanctions of morality. Conscience, then, would be nothing but an attempt to extract a cold scrap of comfort from unavoidable exigencies. Yet the author finds that neither men nor societies rest content under their disabilities; they organize elaborate programs to remove them, applying science and experience to the problems of social betterment. Laing might classify all such programs as intellectual devices to break the will of nature. But their purpose goes deeper; it recognizes the desire of man to consolidate his moral position, to establish a virtuous character, to introduce order and understanding into social behavior. Scientific content is suffused with the emotions of desire. Hardships and setbacks are not primary incentives to action; they are occasions for the expression of moral ideals. Laing

is right in holding that morality is relative, yet relative not alone to conditions outside but also to the determining purposes that suggest moral action.⁵ This leads us back to the function of conscience, which we shall examine again.

The attack against Butler's theory should center on the attribute of autonomy. Is conscience an independent function of the mind? Conscience must be regarded as my individual and indefeasible property. Its dictates are my own, its restraints and approvals mine. I am keeper of my own conscience, but of no other man's. Satisfactions and dissatisfactions as moral emotions belong exclusively to my experience. Cato would have resented the intrusion of the judgment of another statesman in shaping his own duty towards Carthage. His contemporaries might challenge the justice of his decision, but none could presume to doubt the sincerity of his attitude. Even when our associates applaud an act of sacrifice or approve of burdensome penances undertaken to expiate guilt, the real joys or sufferings are private; they can neither be communicated to our neighbors, nor, if so communicated, judged by their standards. The sanctions of conscience, we said, are private; they discharge their functions in the secret chambers of reflection where the problems of conduct are finally settled.

But the picture is only half drawn. Laing has enunciated an important and profound truth to the effect that moral values are related to objective conditions. Conscience has community contacts; its instructions embody the principles of the social order. It is futile, then, to describe conscience as a bare faculty of the soul; the mind has no faculties; it has *activity*. The man at work in the pursuit of his practical duties is the true definition of moral integrity; this is not a definition in the classical form, but in the terms of an exacting experimental logic. Yet duties can only be performed in the realm of human intercourse. Hence we ask: What are the conditions that affect the meaning of conscience?

First (i), conscience is communal because its sources lie

¹ "A Study in Moral Problems," p. 179, *et seq.*

in the permanent habitudes of the race. Sentiments and social reactions differ with the group; they must be explained by the peculiar history of each. An inspection of the fundamental notions of the Greek and Roman minds will tell why the one flourishes under the oligarchical form of government, the other under the imperial. Again, religion contributes its influence to the formation of conscience, and this fact accounts for the Moslem practice of *jehad*, or holy war against infidels, as contrasted with the Christian doctrine of tolerance. The strange anomaly, nevertheless, confronts the student of Spanish history that the Moors allowed their competitors to retain the right of religious worship, while, when the Moors were conquered by Ferdinand and Isabella, they were either ruthlessly slaughtered or brutally expelled from the land. Once more, education leaves its imprint upon every mind it touches. The Puritan conscience is not an unmeaning phrase; it goes back to the persistent drill in the significance and worth of nonsensuous objects—duty, obedience, religious ideals, moral purity. Theaters, pictures, and music, creations of art and beauty, were rigidly excluded from the diversions of the group. Hebraic repression, not Hellenic joy, was the guide to conduct. Morality sank into a system of prohibitions based upon a literal reading of the ancient records; and while conscience, thus disciplined, produced a race of hardy pioneers fitted to the grim task of subduing a new continent and its pagan inhabitants, it could not develop the finer arts of living, which have not only made the world more comfortable for residence but have filled it with the treasures of intellectual achievement. Conscience takes its basic color from its educational training.

But (ii) conscience is communal in another sense; it represents the common hopes and ideals current in the governing society. Grote insists that the prefix to the word signifies the soul's knowledge of itself—its *self-complicity*.⁶ It is no doubt true that every mind can be considered as in a subject-

⁶ "Moral Ideals," p. 187.

object relation—man investigating his private powers, determined to realize his destiny. At the same time, the social interpretation cannot be neglected, as is suggested by the meaning of the cognate term “consciousness.” We may therefore assume that every decision of the individual conscience is an attempt to typify the ruling principles of a particular group. In some instances, the conscience is frankly aware of its representative capacity, as when Walt Whitman registers the strong desire for social freedom under the urge of the great movement for the extirpation of slavery, or when Gladstone mirrors the convictions of a large portion of the English public in his championship of the sanctities of the established creed. Each conscience is a cross section of current thought and will and insists upon making its sanctions effective.

There is also (iii) a third factor that should not be overlooked, namely, that consciences are acknowledged as of equal authority for the individuals concerned, but cannot receive equal consideration at the hands of their neighbors. They have been classified in different ways, especially with respect to the degree of sensitiveness in the apprehension of moral values—acute consciences, hardened consciences, complacent and militant consciences. These terms suggest the facility with which the observing mind can detect the presence of wrong, judge how deeply it has entered a given experience, and determine what methods should be pursued to eradicate it. Such an attitude could not be taken except on the assumption that the wrongs done by a man to himself are also done to the community. Social salvation is therefore the subtle incentive for keeping one’s conscience clear and its enactments just.

2. Status of Conscience as Sanction: (b) Its Dictates.

But are the dictates of conscience unfalteringly just and clear? The answer of Butler is in the affirmative; they are categorical and without qualification. “The superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man pronounces

determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust." There is no need to observe the consequences of the act; the first point to be settled is: Does the act conform to the "nature of the agent" or does it contradict the fundamental laws of body and mind? Can a man, for example, deliberately inflict damage on his own person, or can he twist the prescribed purposes of specific physical organs by unchaste behavior? At the same time, in his Third Sermon, Butler does not shrink from declaring that conscience can and will use the threatened consequences of evil action as a powerful admonition against excess. Still, inevitably, the argument goes back to the initial judgments which we are advised to accept as authoritative and final. Can we do so?

(1) The first objection lies in the fact that a man's conscience varies in accordance with his change in feelings, opinions, or conditions. Martineau, who cannot be accused of suiting his theory to empirical needs, emphatically alleges that conscience as a principle of judgment is never complete; for whether we discharge the elementary obligations of daily service or set up "the matured self-estimate of total character," it is the same conscience that issues the official fiat.⁷ But we may be wrong in both. Consistency is a difficult program to follow except as we remember that growth, change, is a significant mark of consistency. But the awkward fact that stares the conscientious man in the face is that unintentionally he adopts contradictory policies in successive experiences, even though the terms of the problem remain substantially unchanged. The expert analyst could quickly disentangle the incompatible elements, but the plain man finds his path to moral understanding suddenly and effectively blocked. Socrates craftily confined the warnings of his "demon" to negative procedures—things he should not do, journeys he should not take, men he should not consort with—an admission that positive decisions were full of danger. It may seem strange to students of British

⁷"Types of Ethical Theory," Vol. II, p. 402.

history that Edmund Burke, who stood foursquare for the liberty of the American colonies, should shift his position completely and vehemently condemn the efforts of the people of France to rid themselves of the crushing burdens of despotic rule. Theory fell afoul of the hereditary sentiment of England, that the integrity of the nation was identical with the preservation of the royal family. In such a case conviction must give way to emotion; for, if the French monarchy falls, how shall kingship elsewhere be maintained? It is painfully hard to make conscience speak the same words twice; it is even harder to frame convictions once, since many decisions are on the point of being revoked the moment after they are rendered, so uncertain are we as to their moral validity.

(2) The second objection to the authority of conscience is found in the diversity of solutions proposed for the same moral problem. Not men of different races or different social levels or even different mental endowments, but men of the same tradition, the same environment, the same general education, point the contrast here. The place of conscience in human conduct is never so commanding as when it arrays citizens of equal intelligence and probity on opposite sides of a great public question. It is futile to cast suspicion on the motives of the competing groups; men do not enter a grave debate that may issue in open rupture without stern and forceful reasons for their action. The tragic division of sovereign States in the fateful year 1861 was not primarily economic or political in origin; it was due to inherited opinions respecting the meaning of racial distinctions. Both parties to the controversy were sincere in their judgments; their consciences were "clear;" hence, recriminations were wholly out of place. The incident seems to bear out the thesis that the deliverances of conscience are strictly relative; each side had a right to its own conviction, and also had the right to fight for it.

It further warns the judicious mind not to expect an easy reconciliation of conflicting views, since conflicting views necessarily involve conflicting purposes. This is the mistake

that ardent crusaders make in their endeavor to secure "quick results." They assume that a benevolent plan need only be stated to bring immediate adhesion, forgetting that other minds may look upon sudden reforms with a certain degree of suspicion. Thus, a pact for universal peace which is emotionally conceived and loosely drawn will bring instant applause from superficial enthusiasts, whether in legislative halls or city journals or women's clubs. But the question is of such weighty concern that the serious citizen may well defer his opinion until due examination of its terms has been made. Is it supposed that the declaration of good intentions is a stout instrument for the renunciation of war? Do men assume that the tiger-claws of racial honor and national greed can be successfully clipped by the pious sentences of a legally articulated treaty? Conscience may be three-fourths feeling, as Arnold said conduct was of life, but the fourth that outweighs the others, the portion that carries irresistible conviction, is the reflective criticism that uncovers the reasons why the policy is proposed and what valuable ends it will serve. Wise and good men sometimes differ in their loyalties; wise men and sentimental men always do. But consciences that will not anchor their decisions in the logic of experienced truth need expect no consideration from the intelligent leaders of the group.

3. Enforcement of Sanctions: (a) the Rules.

The analysis we have just made has but one end, the determination of the concrete act. Psychology discusses the individual responses of the human organism. Law considers the factors involved in a specific infraction of its code. Medicine may study the physiological system, with its governing habits, its possible maladjustments, and the general manner of treatment, but it is directly concerned with a diagnosis of the single disease presented for examination. The world of human behavior seems to be split into an indefinite series of particular cases, each demanding independent and peculiar attention. It is therefore not un-

expected that ethics should lay its principal emphasis here; and the tendency is confirmed by the frank requirements of the situation. The words of Justice Holmes are true to fact: "The decision of many cases depends on a judgment or intuition more subtle than any major premise." What conscience needs is not a supreme law fitted to any temperament or environment, such as, "So act that you can will your act to be a universal law," or, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you," but a guiding rule that covers the complex questions in the given instance and suggests at least a partial solution. Principles or maxims are unattainable ideals; yet no man or nation would willingly part with the solemn terms of the implied covenant. At the same time, the situation is urgent and explicit; it must be met, and met promptly. Hence, conscience needs practical rules of guidance, and these we shall briefly enumerate.

The first rule states that every moral decision follows upon a conflict of interests. The meaning of a rule is subjective in the sense that it is devised to meet the contradictory conditions in organic behavior. Thus, the impulse to preserve life (our own) is flanked by the impulse to take our neighbor's life. The clash of interests is at once apparent; for the attack upon another individual brings a counter-attack upon myself. The question at issue then is: Shall we pursue our efforts for private aggrandizement and almost certainly suffer serious injury, or shall we cultivate acquaintance on even terms with our one-time enemy and thus escape all unfavorable effects? The aboriginal love of fighting and the derivative interest in our fellows come into open collision, symbolizing the thousand and one contentions which native instinct or reflective motive may excite.

The problems of duty have already been canvassed,⁸ and we may therefore pass to the second rule, which is that every moral decision requires the exercise of the intellectual imagination. This provides for the ideal construction of

⁸ Pt. III, Ch. 3.

a situation, never yet encountered in experience, which, nevertheless, embodies the peculiar features that now face the disturbed conscience.⁹ Let us "imagine" one of these cases. A young man has successfully completed his apprenticeship in an influential banking-house. He now has access to the private offices of the leading men in the management. Without curious prying or officious intrusion on his part, he has become aware of certain grave irregularities in the conduct of the business, and his knowledge of the facts is detected by the guilty parties. He is at once approached and tendered a substantial reward if he will assist in concealing the delinquencies. He is also warned at the same time that, should he utter a syllable of suspicion, they will turn upon him and charge him publicly with malfeasance in his duties. "Safety first" is the policy of the cynical conscience; what is the edict of the untrammelled moral sense? The second rule prescribes the answer. He may and should take time to survey in fancy the courses open to him. He might then construct a typical solution based on the principles of right which he confidently assumes to be his. He may go farther and fashion the features of a consummately good man, endowed with the instincts of honor and veracity, and ask what kind of judgment *he* would frame in similar circumstances. Fowler writes these sententious words:

The conception of perfect justice or the perfectly just man which is constantly being elaborated by the mind, and which is constantly approaching nearer and nearer to the completeness and perfection at which it aims, has a tendency to elevate a man's practice, and to bring it into closer and closer accordance with itself.¹⁰

The third rule is still more practical in tone; it bids us determine the precise place of the proposed act in the

⁹ Havelock Ellis in "The Dance of Life," p. 336, writes of the psycho-analytic work of Dr. Alfred Adler as follows: "Adler has suggestively shown how often a man's or woman's character is constituted by a process of fiction—that is, by making an ideal of what it is, or what it ought to be—and then as far as possible molding it into the shape of the fiction, a process which is often interwoven with morbid elements."

¹⁰ "Principles of Morals," p. 291.

series of proportionate moral values. Civil law has already adopted the principle. Homicide, for instance, is not of equal gravity in all its forms; the gradation of guilt is reflected in the corresponding gradation of punishment. Guilt and retribution are invariably associated in the execution of the law. In many cases, the correspondence is far from exact, mainly because jurisprudence cannot set up the exact differences between the several levels of criminal responsibility. Morality has an even more difficult task, as will be seen if we examine the shades of reprehensibility in the use of falsehoods. On what occasions and for what groups is the telling of a lie a justifiable act? Early in the speculations of European society, men began to conjure up a sliding scale of merit and guilt. Cicero, in his "*De Officiis*," gives in detail the Stoic attempts to classify duties and assign the proper penalties for disobedience. Casuistry was born of social needs. Many minds were without the gift of subtle analysis and were thus unable to make a true decision either in the choice of a right motive or the correct appraisal of the resulting act. When, however, the system was meticulously refined, as it was by the members of the Jesuit order, it became an instrument for the avoidance of penalty rather than for the just settlement of a complicated moral problem. The moral intelligence of civilized nations soon revolted from the patent excesses. Men like Pascal objected to the unwarranted twist given to certain moral maxims when applied to acts of another order. Thus, he regarded it as an outrage to justify assassination on the ground of offended honor, if the deed could be done without hatred and not be held a precedent for justifying "murders of a gross kind and hurtful to society."¹¹ Rousseau, in "*Emile*," denounced the practice of using ambiguous methods for the attainment of private ends; "it is only when men wish to cheat that they fly to logical quibbles." In short, the system has been condemned because it emphasizes the letter rather than the spirit of the law, because

¹¹ "*Provincial Letters*," Ch. 7.

it exalts the retributory aspects of conduct and not the spontaneous adherence to principles which inure to the making of virtuous character.¹²

Shall we, then; reject the method of moral classification and trust to the chance intuition of conscience to reveal the appropriate course? Ethics cannot afford to lag behind its kindred sciences. Medicine classifies diseases and organizes a schedule of remedies. Expert analysis has removed the incidence of doubt in certain significant cases. It would be a grave mistake to withhold similar precision of method in the cure of souls. The moral casuist must establish a methodology that will be beyond reproach. He must reject alliances with men and schools that propose to charm the wavering will into submission by a species of prudential wizardry. G. B. Shaw is a warning, not a prophetic, voice; it is necessary to examine with scrupulous care the axioms on which his ethical creed rests. Codes that, when analyzed, reveal but a partial view of human nature should be resolutely disregarded. The code of conduct that men need is found imbedded in some of the classical formulas of literature—the decalogue of “Exodus,” the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the fourth book of Plato’s “Republic,” the maxims of Aurelius, the Pandects of Justinian, the essays of Montaigne, the letters of Chesterfield to his son, the “Areopagitica” of Milton, the “Sermons” of Butler, and so on down the list. No pains should be spared to obtain a consistent program of duties and their sanctions which the humblest understanding may adopt and which yet will conform to the highest standards of veracity and honor.

4. Enforcement of Sanctions: (b) the Emotional Results.

The last stage in the operation of a sanction is the supervenience of a mass of feelings which reflect the moral quality of the deed. Mackenzie is uncertain whether good deeds carry emotional appreciation with them. Conformity

¹² See H. Rashdall, “Theory of Good and Evil,” for an excellent discussion of the subject.

to moral principle is, he thinks, the normal state of the moral consciousness, and can therefore awaken no calculable thrill of satisfaction. "Pleasures of conscience" is merely a name. But his assumption is not borne out by experience. It is true that repeated discharge of the same obligations, as, for example, paying one's bills promptly, meeting one's engagements on time, tends to dull the edge of gratification; and this confirms the truth of the thesis upon which the argument of this book is founded. Furthermore, pleasurable feelings are more marked in cases that are novel or exceptionally important; but this is equally true of negative sanctions, which record the greater gravity of the offense through increased intensity of the accompanying sensations. We may therefore conclude that *merit* receives due recognition in the approval of conscience and that this approval is embodied in the genuine contentment which follows hard upon a truly moral achievement.

But, while these facts are generally admitted, it may also be said that men are more profoundly impressed with the surge of pain that issues from the sentence of moral condemnation. Pangs of conscience, no doubt, register the primitive revulsions of fear; but they become to civilized thought the indices of personal guilt. Society is agreed that remorse is one of the most powerful instruments of self-revelation within reach of human experience. It cannot be excited by the coercions of civil law or the reprobation of social opinion; it can only be aroused by private conviction, the conviction that a wrong has been done and that we are responsible for it. There are two elements in the situation, first, the judgment that the superior desires have been premeditatedly deprived of their due fruition, and, secondly, the realization that we have suffered a determinate lowering of our self-respect, infinitely more agonizing than any social disrepute could be. The unique mortification and sorrow of remorse can be best understood by comparing them with the calmer feelings of regret. Dewey supposes that both belong to the mind's execration of its offense. Regret forbids us to dwell too long on the invidious conse-

quences, while remorse exposes the baseness of the motives that could issue in such reprehensible results.¹³

The relation, however, is not adequately stated; it does not agree with the accepted meaning of the terms. Regret is an imaginative recoil from the bitter effects of an event for which, in its origin and unfolding, we could in no way be held responsible. Macduff can regret with good conscience the untimely murder of the King. None of his intimate aspirations has been traversed by the untoward deed. He mourns as a true courtier and obedient servant, but turns at once to the surviving heir as the object of his new loyalty. Macbeth, on the other hand, cannot experience regret. The word is too narrow, too unimpressive, too inconstant, to fill up the measure of his emotion. The cankerous deed is gnawing at his vitals. Sleep, peace, confidence, have fled away. He lives in another world, dark, forbidding, without hope. The herbs of the field, the charms of the witches' caldron, cannot soothe his agitated feelings.

Canst thou minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written tablets of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the foul bosom of the perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Remorse is the acknowledgment of guilt with the accompanying degradation of character. But remorse must be something more than emotion if it is to bear the burden of guilt which conscience loads upon it. It must have the curb of judgment, or it will pass into a mawkish sentimentalism which will in future obscure any critical scrutiny of behavior and leave men satisfied with a pretense of virtue. Remorse is essentially constructive; on the one side, it is the symbol of defeat; on the other, a challenge to reorganization. Few states of feeling make greater demands upon the offices of the rational judgment. It not only insists on

¹³ "Study of Ethics," Ch. 6.

knowing how the original purposes of conduct have been thwarted but also what means may be taken to make repentance effective. The matter again is strictly private; it suffers no intrusion from the commands of society, none from the sanctions of religion. The first step in the elimination of self-reproach is the frank and complete admission of culpability: we are guilty. This is followed by carefully drawn measures to repair the damage done to our sense of honor and to the interests of our neighbors, if these be at all affected. The final step is reached when we weigh the motives and interests of a new proposed action, inquiring whether any of the former disabling factors remain. For this reason, repentance is more than resolution; it is full-fledged effort. Paper promises are futile, especially when made to oneself. Treaties between nations become mere "scraps of paper" before the threats of war. Will the treaty which we make with our own conscience stand the test of time? The answer lies in the tenacity with which the vows of repentance are kept.

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CHAPTER V

THE SANCTIONS OF LAW

The efficacy of a sanction depends on the connection between the act and its normal consequences. Sanctions bind men to the quality and meaning of a certain type of behavior. The sure sign of noncompliance in the cases already studied is the emotional confusion of the dissentient mind expressed in the sense of shame, the conviction of blameworthiness, and the penetrating remorse of conscience. Hence, from one standpoint, every sanction is a private experience, even when the inciting cause is found in the settled habits of the group. But the sanctions of law present an altogether different face. A court of trial never raises the question whether the defendant is sorry for his deed. Except in rare instances, where the evidence of guilt is overwhelming or where it is hoped that plea of *non vult contendere* (decline to contest) may win a reservation of mercy, the answer of the accused or his attorney to the query of the court is, "Not guilty." It is just possible that a genuine expression of penitence, developing in the course of the trial, may serve to mitigate the severity of the sentence, provided the crime be not felonious in character. But the purpose of legal conviction is not to arouse a sense of shame nor even to impress the defendant with the majesty of the law. Justice has a single interest in the case: it proposes to apply the exact and suitable penalty.

The sanction, therefore, is wholly public; that is, it can be measured by the rules of the laboratory and the market place. It appears under two forms, restraint upon goods and compulsion of body; and, since external goods have worth only as they satisfy physical needs, the sanctions of law affect the body directly, the emotions only indirectly. In

fact, if feeling is aroused at all, it does not take the form of shame or remorse but of chagrin at the miscarriage of plans or fear at the approach of pain. At the same time, no sympathetic judge can pronounce a just sentence—short of death—without expressing the hope that its terms shall bring home to the guilty man an appreciation both of the heinousness of the deed and the need for a complete revision of his moral code.

1. Law and Morals: How Distinguished.

We assume at the outset that law and morals refer to different though contiguous forms of human behavior. How are they distinguished? The distinction is not quantitative. Society is not divided into two complementary segments, one subject to law, the other not. The ancient aphorism that "law is made for the wicked" is a mistake. If all men knew and followed the dictates of moral justice, law, we are told, would be superfluous. But society is not so organized. Society is the arena of competing desires, and peace is attained only after the severest sort of struggle. Hence, while in the long run comparatively few citizens fall into the clutches of the law, no analyst can compute with accuracy how many might succumb to serious delinquencies if the sanctions of law were removed. Furthermore, the law-abiding majority is intimately concerned with making the system of law effective for the whole body politic, thereby safeguarding its own interests. The one way to accomplish this is to entrust the administration of justice to men of proved ability and honor. It thus appears that ethics and jurisprudence agree in accepting jurisdiction within the same general domain; they also agree in deriving their structure and principles of action from the same source, namely, experience. They do not agree in the specific forms of behavior treated, and the difference includes three points: the authority of law, its sanctions, and the obligations imposed on the citizens.

(1) First, law is ordained by a determinate body of per-

sons having the sovereign right to formulate its provisions. It is marked by precision of form and finality of powers and therefore contrasts with the decrees of morality, which vary in content and have no united support behind them. In a modern state like the American republic, the ultimate test of authority resides in a written document called the Constitution. It prescribes the methods by which particular statutes shall be enacted. These statutes reflect the needs and desires of the group, but are valid only when they do not contravene the Constitution, as interpreted by the decisions of the Supreme Court. Hence, if any citizen feels his interests jeopardized by the intent of the law, he is at liberty to take his case to the tribunal whose decision stands as the last and authoritative word in the matter. Manifestly, declarations of this sort are utterly impossible in the field of moral behavior. This is the more evident because the moral appellant has no "determinate" number of judges to whom he may refer his conduct for appraisal. In the theory of democratic government, numbers alone count; hence, Austin's principle of *determinateness* is true to fact. Serious embarrassments result from the operation of such a principle. Decisions must be taken by a majority vote alone; this is required both of popular elections and the action of the Supreme Court. But in public elections there is no actual majority; it is merely technical and often represents but a small part of the electorate. In many cases, too, it embodies the opinions of the local autocrat, the vigorous campaign committee, the subsidized metropolitan journals. In like manner, the "will" of the people may be thwarted by the connivance of the legislators, by the threats of the executive who seeks to promote the interests of a few, and, finally, by the "packing" of the courts, a device not unknown in modern statecraft. Still, the number of responsible electors is known, and they must take the blame for failure in the execution of the laws. In this respect, moral behavior is at a great disadvantage; its support is irregular and uncertain; it cannot count on society's sympathetic approval of acts of rectitude or programs of public reforms.

(2) Once more, law differs from morals in the application of its sanctions. No doubt the property of law which impresses most forcibly the social imagination is its schedule of penalties and the fair certainty of their enforcement. True, jurisprudence is by no means an exact science. By reason of certain inequalities in the human material with which they deal, jurist and judge find an inherent resistance to a precise definition of crime and an impartial execution of its terms. Thus, the shades of difference within a single type of offense are extremely hard to trace, and, if detected, hard to classify according to an ascending scale of guilt. In the Leopold-Loeb murder case in the Chicago courts, the guilt was amply proven. The murder was committed by two young men, one of them a student of law; it introduced a motive somewhat new to criminal procedure, namely, killing in order to observe the psychological reactions of the dying victim. What form of punishment should be imposed? Is youth or the absence of the ordinary egregious motive, such as revenge or hate or greed, an extenuating condition? We may note again the discriminatory practices in vogue in the trial courts—obstructive evidence, long-drawn-out prosecution, testimony that confuses the points at issue, attempts to “fix” the jury by bribes or promise of later benefits; also the delays set up to postpone the operation of the sentence—motion for a new trial, feigned sickness of the defendant, political influence, the massing of wealth to change the normal course of the law. Yet, with all these countervailing factors, we may still admit that in the majority of well-organized societies the intent of the law is substantially observed and its sanctions respected. Retribution is fairly certain and fairly appropriate.

Facing squarely the facts as we know them, we may question whether society uses its nonlegal sanctions with equal impartiality. Consider the contrast of these cases. A young woman is betrayed by her seducer and gives birth to an illegitimate child. Is she wholly responsible for the misstep? She has had no instructions from family or school as to the meaning of sex relations. Her associates have treated

the subject with levity and mirth. "Be a sport; have a little fun," is the essence of their injunctions.¹ Society has instituted no methods of redress if "consent" is given; men who trade on the inexperience of youth incur no punishment. The stigma, however, is hers, a damning reprobation that the social memory never forgets. Then study the parallel. The young society matron divorces her husbands at will, in order to obtain another connection. Neither her social group nor the majesty of the law interposes the slightest objection. She is heralded in the newspapers as the expounder of the new freedom of women; she is even supported—passively—by the ministers of religion. She escapes the charge of bigamy by a sort of legalized sequential polygamy. Her name and fame are clear; she is without fault. Is the social sanction equitable in substance and application? What moral critic would be willing to admit the claim?

(3) The third distinction between law and morals lies in the nature of the obligation. Thus, both of them prohibit acts of dishonesty. For morals, such a dereliction means the misapprehension of the basic principles of justice and their place in the social order. For law, it means that the man has willfully violated an express canon of conduct and must suffer for it. In the eyes of the law, a man is not good merely because he subscribes publicly to the maxims of honor and veracity. No witness on the stand can profess his adherence to the idea of gratitude, and then conceal material evidence in the case for the purpose of protecting his benefactor. Where there is a reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the defendant, his known character will weigh heavily in determining his guilt or innocence. In general, an honorable motive will be respected as a fact in moral experience, but in law it must be tested by the explicit intent of the action. On the other hand, a man is never good merely because he obeys the letter of the law. Kant argued that formally honest acts are not virtuous if performed merely

¹ The New York courts for the year 1928 have on record testimony substantially in these words.

out of kindly regard for others; they have, in reality, no moral value whatsoever. It is admitted that the motive must be valid and the scheme of conduct correct; otherwise, we have merely *legal* goodness, which is essentially different from moral virtue. Thus, Austin says:

The man who fulfills his duty *because* he fears the sanction is an *unjust* man, although his conduct be just. If he could violate his duty without incurring the evil, his conduct would accord with the desires which urge him to break it.²

The plain fact is that law does not seek to produce character or goodness as a moral value; it aims to set in motion a series of objective events which agree with the literal requirements of its code. Writers like Hobbes insist that the "political fear of punishment maketh men just." Justness here is a civil property, not a trait of internal character; if that is so, morality must be identified with obedience to law. Austin thinks that if fear can extinguish the desires which urge to disobedience, a man will do his duty spontaneously and become just in the strictly moral sense. But can the fangs of fear be completely drawn? Is it not true that the most estimable citizen finds himself in a momentary state of revulsion through fear, when a sudden impulse to commit an offense falls upon him? In these days of elaborated legal ordinances touching almost every endeavor in the common life of the citizen, no man is so sure of his position before the law that he may be sure of his exemption also. We may grant that the contemplation of impending pains will teach some persons the wisdom of restraint; it cannot, however, change their moral habits; it can simply protect society from the consequences of criminal behavior in certain instances.

2. Rights and Legal Sanctions.

Hitherto we have studied the principle of legal sanction from the point of view of the organized state. The individual obeys the law which he, as part of the law-giving au-

² "Lectures on Jurisprudence," Vol. I, p. 449.

thority, has formally created. We now examine the peculiar rights which he possesses as a member of the legal society. Rights imply duties in the civil state as in the communal group; but in the former all duties belong to other persons, not to the holder of the rights. Hence, the holder of rights may demand that they be not infringed upon and that, if they suffer infringement, due and appropriate penalty should lie against the aggressor. What are these rights?

"Strictly speaking," writes Austin, "there are no rights but those which are the creatures of law."³ He assumes that rights are of no value except as they carry with them a prescriptive sanction, the very condition which common sense ordinarily requires. For example, the desire to exercise unhampered influence upon my fellow men in accordance with my capacities is an acknowledged moral right; it is, however, a right not "armed with a legal sanction" and hence likely to be ineffective through the inattention of my neighbors, their opposition to my message, or their dislike of my person. But freedom as a legal concept considers not only the possible resistance or aggression on the part of other men, but a legal response in the form of compensation paid by the aggressor to the holder of the right. Thus, I am free to erect a protecting fence about a piece of land which belongs to me in fee simple; it is the duty of all men to refrain from entering my premises without permission; if they enter against my will, they can be prosecuted at law. I am free to bestow my commercial patronage wherever I please; it is the duty of my neighbors to refrain from persuading tradesmen to refuse to sell me their goods; if they do not so refrain, I may prosecute and obtain damages. I am free to seek the kind of education that seems to me suitable to my talents and to the vocation I propose to follow; it is the duty of the community not to interfere with my plans, providing they do not injure the system of instruction already set up by official orders; if the community do so interfere, I may seek redress in the courts.

³ *Ibid.*, I, 344.

Rights have been variously classified by responsible jurists, sometimes as private and public, corresponding roughly to the division between civil and criminal cases; sometimes as rights *in rem* and *in personam*, the former embracing all objects tangible and intangible that I can call my own—wife, children, property, repute, liberty; the other, my particular relations with individuals—as the signing of a contract to build a house or an agreement to enter another's employ. But while in practice these principles of division are valuable and suggestive, they do not bring home to the average observer the scope and diversity of his legal rights. It is therefore better to adopt the primitive classification into physical and mental, and determine how far they have actually been written into the organic law.

Physical rights begin with the right of good birth, a requirement not yet formally acknowledged by statute. The science of eugenics is in its infancy, and serious objections must be removed before the consent of society can be obtained to make it universally valid. For example, does it conflict with the principle of personal freedom? Can social wisdom deal successfully with the intricate details of a given situation? Will the technical knowledge needed to make the law effective be used to limit the procreation of children and thus destroy the future of the state? But if the right to the beginning of life has not been carefully safeguarded, the right to its preservation has never been questioned. Yet is the life of the modern citizen thoroughly secure? Health measures are now scientifically framed and applied; the police service is as resourceful as at any time in history. Still, Nietzsche's injunction to "live dangerously" is quite superfluous. The arts of peace have left life more uncertain than the devices of war. Nonmalignant forces—the factory, the motor-car, the airplane, the speeding train—threaten the security of life and limb; malignant hosts—the bandit, the bootlegger, all the powers of fraud and chicanery—make street, place of business, and even the secluded home, unsafe and perturbed. How shall the insidi-

ous attacks upon the elementary rights of man be stopped?

The rights of body include two others even more precious because they impinge on the qualities of mind, namely, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These rights are not abstract generalities, but parts of the warp and woof of our legal system. Are they sedulously guarded? If a man be summoned to court on a charge of which he is no way guilty, is he free to repudiate the charge and counter upon the summons by an independent suit for damages? Theoretically, his freedom is untrammelled; in reality, he is hampered by lack of funds, inexperience in the methods of legal procedure, fear of reprisal by powerful opponents, and these are equivalent to the denial of freedom. Nor is his right more complete in form or attainment when he seeks the development of his desire to live. It is surrounded by embarrassing limitations. Happiness, that is, complacent well-being, a balanced cultivation of all the interests of mind and body, cannot be reached except when economic conditions and political adjustments lend their stimulating aid. How far does the law provide the means for exercising the right undisturbed? For instance, is the right to make suitable contracts guaranteed unequivocally to every citizen without exception? Is the right of agency, one of the most important in the entire series of practical rights, thoroughly understood and justly administered? These are questions for jurisprudence and ethics alike, and they merit the closest attention of earnest students of social problems.

The rights of mind have had an even harder struggle to gain their proper place in the structure of law, yet broad beginnings, at least, have been effected. Men have now the right to "immunity from fraud" by the instruments of deceit.⁴ This involves the recognition of intelligence as an essential factor in social exchange. Again, men have obtained the acknowledgment of property in *ideas* which are protected by legal copyright. They may also patent the products of their ingenuity; they may fashion an exclusive trade-mark which other dealers must not imitate. Law exacts

⁴ Consult T. E. Holland, "Elements of Jurisprudence," p. 322.

a heavy penalty from persons who "infringe" these rights. But, significant as such achievements are, they do not embody the basic rights of mind; first, to suitable and adequate education, and, secondly, to free exposition of one's personal opinions in so far as they comport with the public welfare. In many civilized nations, the former right is on the point of universal recognition, with all the sanctions of law behind it. The time cannot be long delayed when legal penalties, or, at all events, the threat of "action," will no longer halt the advance of scientific experimentation or philosophical inquiry. Thus, the theory of biological evolution is not a subject for statutory condemnation. To-day, in certain quarters, the matter is discussed by teachers at their peril. To-morrow it will not be reserved for the instructed intellect at work in the scientific laboratory, but will be taught everywhere, without question. Law is conservative; but ultimately it follows best progress of the age.

Individual rights, however, do not stand alone; they are flanked and interpreted by the needs of the group. In the moments of social hazard, no individual life is sacred. Exceptions may be made in favor of men with extraordinary talents, a great artist like Caruso, a distinguished philosopher like Hegel. The principle is that the peril of one is the peril of all, and *vice versa*. The right to live becomes explicitly *the right to live if the community lives*. If war must come, it is desirable that service in all branches of defense be strictly voluntary. Then, those who decline to serve are put in a position where they are obliged to explain the reasons for their dissent. The problem is sometimes exceedingly grave; for if one group be excused from enlistment on grounds of "conscience," other groups may offer equally cogent reasons for rejecting the policy of the administration; as a result, the entire program of national defense may be in danger. It appears that the limitation of rights on the basis of social duty is a matter of the greatest concern in conducting the business of the state and can be settled only after a painstaking inquiry into all the issues involved.

3. Legal Punishment and Its Justification.

Every social institution must be examined from the standpoint of the moral values which it realizes. We can justify its existence only on that ground. Legal punishment forms an inherent part of every historic civil system. Hence, the specific problem before us may be stated thus: Does the state possess the moral authority to compel the offender against its laws to endure the pains and privations incident to the operation of the sanctions? Surrender of goods, surrender of liberty, in certain cases torments of body, are set as the equivalents of criminal trespass. On what ground can they be justified?

The first and most persistent reason is the idea of retribution, the *lex talionis* of the primitive community. It vocalizes the cry for vengeance, compensation for objective wrong. Critical philosophy has in some instances adopted the same explanation. "Juridical punishment," says Kant, "must in all cases be imposed only because the individual on whom it is inflicted has committed a crime;" "we pay the penalty," says Bradley, "because we owe it and for no other reason." This is the verdict of ethical individualism, which finds in conduct a mathematical equation, a point-to-point correspondence, between action and consequences. The vindictive temper—*homo homini lupus*, every man preys upon his neighbor—has disappeared. Society does not avenge; it exacts equal return for guilt. This is the only method by which the injurious effects of crime can be made intelligible to the offender. We may agree that a modicum of truth is embedded in the theory; it would be sheer nonsense to assign the same form of punishment to every crime. Punishment would then lose its meaning altogether, and the number of crimes of the grosser sort inevitably increase. We must at least hold to the elementary distinction between misdemeanor and felony; offenses which belong to the first category should not be indifferently included in the other. At the same time, the common difficulty is not avoided: how can the penalty be wholly equal to the crime? Green

draws a contrast between the fraud perpetrated by a respectable bank official and the barefaced robbery by the hardened thief, and he argues that for the former the terrors of law are sufficiently expressed in the simple experience of imprisonment without the addition of hard labor.⁵ But the answer is clear: the crime of the intelligent man is more egregious and more destructive than the other's by virtue of his superior responsibilities. Hence, he must bear the added punishment to atone for his greater guilt.

But, again, punishment is said to be *deterrent*; it tends to reduce the amount of crime by the severity of its sentences. Critics have questioned on scientific grounds the validity of this theory. Human beings are, it is admitted, imitative by nature, but they also delight to take a risk. The timid may hesitate, the bold will gamble on success. Hence, while a few are impressed by the operation of the law, the many snap their fingers at fate and go their own willful way. The rule covers two distinct classes of cases, the possible repeater and the man who confronts his first attempt at crime. Certain progressive communities attest the surrender of their belief in the principle of deterrence by sentencing men to imprisonment for life after the third or fourth offense. Can they still hold it to be valid against the first offense? Is it a demonstrable proposition that a considerable number of persons in the state have actually been deterred from committing crimes through fear of physical privations? Must we, then, argue that men who are formally proven guilty have been actuated in the execution of their designs by a greater emotion than fear? The latter fact is substantiated by the objections which we raised to the entire system of Hedonism, namely, that the transfer of feelings is impossible.⁶ Such powerful feelings as resentment stay not for the multitude of "examples" which the law presents to view. They cannot be silenced by the warnings of the state, certainly not when the guardians of the law themselves are intimidated by the reckless dis-

⁵ "Principles of Political Obligations," Works, Vol. II, p. 498.

⁶ Pt. II, Ch. 4.

regard of life. Hence, we conclude that in certain cases the fear of punishment may be a preventive agency, but that it cannot be depended on to justify altogether the value of punishment as a social program.

Is there, then, a third ground upon which punishment rests, namely, its restorative and reforming office? Green suggests that every culprit has certain "reversionary rights" which he may properly expect the state to safeguard.⁷ If the penalty be death, these rights are abortive. If his life be granted him, he should be subjected to such training of mind and body as will bring to the surface the finer traits of human character, so far as they are capable of being developed. This attitude revokes the earlier mathematical theory of law; it asserts that government deals not merely with a man who has committed a punishable offense but with a man who, up to that time, had no thoroughgoing knowledge of the meaning of the law. The settlement of the case, however, must begin with a correct determination of the penalty. In at least one community it has been seriously recommended that, after the verdict of guilty has been rendered by judge or jury, the nature of the sentence should be decided by an expert commission. Mental pathology, sociology, medical science, jurisprudence (as distinguished from legal practice), should be consulted. Except in unusual cases, the sentence may be indeterminate and should be carried out with constant surveillance of the prisoner's behavior, noting his growth in regular mental and moral habits, especially in the power of self-control, his changing attitude to his fellows, and his interest in and aptitude for the specific kind of work assigned to him. All the time the meaning of his incarceration should be kept before his eyes, in order that he may see for himself the stages through which he passes in the path of rehabilitation.

4. Conflicts of Law and Morals.

Law as a form of moral behavior is admitted to be sovereign in its own sphere. It represents, however, only

⁷ "Principles of Political Obligations," Works, II, 509.

one form of incentive and one form of sanction—fear and force, respectively. As the social understanding grows in its appreciation of man's needs and purposes, it is likely that the prohibitory temper will be superseded slowly by the constructive principle. That is, we shall say, "This is what you *should* do," not, "This is what you *must not* do." In the meantime, we do well to recognize certain points of conflict in the present relations of law and morals.

The tendency of law is to judge conduct strictly in terms of the consequences of an act. The simple question proposed is, does this act destroy the intent of the law? If it does, no extenuating condition can forbid the application of the sanction. Hobbes assumes that for the just man submission is the one conceivable attitude. But morality answers that law is only one of the major values of behavior; it would therefore be detestable to yield supinely to a legal ordinance which contradicted a canon of judgment that in our belief was superior to it. Thus, in 1905 the Nonconformists of England were confronted with a parliamentary enactment requiring them to support by taxes a type of religious instruction which was repugnant to their traditions. They adopted the method of "passive resistance;" they refused to pay the rate and went to prison for their refusal. To some undiscerning critics, the protest seemed irrelevant; to the offended conscience, the law was the enemy of good morals, and men would suffer rather than betray their sense of fidelity. Fowler generalizes such a situation thus:

First, the presumption should always be in favor of the law. Unless we have very fully considered the matter, and have had good opportunities for forming a judgment, it is more likely that the legislator is right than that we are. But, supposing that we have taken the best opportunities of informing ourselves, and that we have arrived at a deliberate conviction that the law enjoins what is morally wrong or prohibits us from doing what we feel morally bound to do, we are justified in disobeying the law, and, in fact, are under a moral obligation to do so.⁸

The next tendency of law is to put conduct into square

⁸ "Principles of Morals," p. 156.

compartments without regard to individuating motives. To this end, law insists upon the *overt*ness of the act; it must have an objective, computable property which prevents it from being confused with another type of offense. To be sure, law can and does make lamentable mistakes. The "Silence of Dean Maitland" is a memorable exposition of the possibility of judicial error. The offense is empirically determined; but the offender can be identified only by the testimony of implicated parties. The conviction of the wrong man only goes to show how limited is the range of the principle of overt^{ness} upon which the courts depend to so great an extent. Hence, there is need of a more penetrating examination of the possible motives which could incite men to a given form of action. This would involve a revaluation of the types of offense as well as a reorganization of the system of penalties.

The third tendency is to overemphasize the effects of a particular offense, either upon the individual or upon the collective society. Courts are at times temperamental and should be confronted with the sharp realization of the meaning of human rights. The highest tribunal of the land may mistake the implications of a far-flung statute, and criticism of its decisions should not be withheld on the ground that they represent the official sovereignty of the nation. Courts are constantly criticizing their own judgments by peremptory revisals at a later date, a plain admission that no decision is final and irreversible. The Supreme Court of the United States is palpably in error when, by a judgment in 1928, it lays down the rule that the telephone wires leading to the residence of a private citizen may be "tapped" by the agents of the Government, in order to obtain evidence of complicity in a plot to nullify the operation of the enabling act under the Eighteenth Amendment. The president of the most influential telephone company at once announced that he would not accept the decision as valid, and in this position he is upheld by a very considerable body of competent opinion. The right of privacy for innocent citizens is incontestable; no man is obliged to incrim-

inate himself in the process of trial, and certainly should not be lured indirectly and by extremely questionable methods into a similar precarious situation outside the courtroom. The "welfare" of the public requires no such underhand procedure for the safeguarding of its interests.

The final tendency which differentiates law from morals is that which holds a decision rendered under a certain schedule to be a true expression of legal justice. "No law can be unjust," said Hobbes; hence any judgment imposed under its terms must participate in its formally correct character. But this is patently untrue; both propositions are controverted by facts of record. Furthermore, law is progressive in development. Thus, the law of corporate liability for accidents suffered by employees in the pursuit of their duties has undergone important changes in the growth of industrial states, many of these changes indicating a new appreciation of the worth of personality. If we compare with this the status of the serf in medieval Europe or of the indentured servant in colonial America, we may see how far the moral sensitiveness of the world has advanced in enacting its maxims into law. In general, however, law resists revision, as we find attested by the checks and hazards imposed by the founders on our juridical system, and it yields only when public sentiment has definitely crystallized upon a concrete point of major excellence.

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CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION

One of the recognized functions of the civil state is to exercise what are technically called the police powers of government. The most fundamental are the preservation of life and the protection of property. Neither law nor morals can be adequately maintained apart from the safety of person and goods. Failing these, the primitive impulses of the human mind, fear and savage hate, work their undisputed will. If, however, these be duly defined, then the more complicated relations of society come slowly within the range of political administration. In general, we may say that two classes of rights are guaranteed to every citizen, namely, those of association and those of contract. Thus, the unity of the family is written in the body of the organic law. Modern communities require an official license for the performance of the marriage ceremony, and, when once the obligations have been assumed, they can be canceled only by the action of the courts. A voluntary rupture of relations alone does not constitute a legal divorce. Similarly, if two or more men engage under contract to conduct a business in common, investing moneys and skill in due proportion, the state will demand an exact fulfillment of the terms, except where the agreement is dissolved by mutual consent without violation of the principle of the sanctity of contracts. These rights are supported by the sanctions already described.

Do the police powers of government extend to the more subtle engagements of the mind? Obviously, it is not the function of political authority to formulate the views that citizens should hold in the fields of religion, science, and philosophy. Religion has been used by statesmen in all

ages as an implement for controlling the sentiments and actions of the people. It has thus brought the semblance of order to the movements of the group. Except in rare instances, such as the meditations of Marcus Aurelius or the abstract theorizing of the Revolutionists in France, philosophical tenets have played but a minor rôle in the discharge of public business. Science is too new an intellectual force to have made its influence felt in any measurable degree. The axiom of modern statecraft is that the subjects of men's thought cannot be prescribed by public statute.

At the same time, we may pertinently ask whether the state is permitted to set up the procedure which shall teach its citizens the elementary methods of reflective thinking. May the organized community erect a system of education for the promotion of culture within its borders? The answer of the modern state is unequivocal. Education is not simply the individual's right; it is the just and necessary function of government. It is probable that this thesis will never again be challenged. Education is now a civil sanction imposing discipline and self-restraint upon the entire body politic. This does not imply that all instruction should be under the direct auspices of the state, although it may happen that with the growth of knowledge and the broadening of experience such an ideal end may ultimately be realized. The point to be observed is that education cannot be a voluntary policy, adopted rigorously by some, rejected contemptuously by others; it is the collective task of the members of society undertaken for the express purpose of bringing to the surface their latent capacities. To learn is equivalent to safeguarding one's life. Since the preservation of life is the unmistakable power of the social state, so also is the providing of means thereto through education one of its prime duties. The meaning of education will vary with the traditions of the group, but one formula may be accepted without reserve, namely, that education is a process, not a finished product such as would be embodied in a series of coördinated concepts. Only in this sense can it be described as a vital social sanction.

1. Education, the Stopgap of Ignorance.

It was the peculiar merit of Spinoza to have discovered the intimate connection between logical exactness and moral values. No man can expect to pursue a course of virtue who is not capable of understanding the principles of correct reasoning, that is, "know the union existing between the mind and the whole of nature."¹ He pushed the inquiry of Socrates one step further by examining the genesis of the just act as an element in behavior. His argument is based on the assumption that the ignorant man cannot attain moral excellence, which is only a revised statement of the familiar Socratic maxim that "virtue is knowledge." It is important that the kernel of his argument should not be lost to the scholars and men of affairs of the present age. We shall therefore take for granted that the correlation is real and inescapable, and proceed to unfold its practical implications.

We must first determine the areas of experience in which the average mind is apt to encounter serious limitations. Ignorance, be it noted, is not synonymous with mental inadequacy, a pathological condition which only scientific skill can even seek to relieve. Nor does it involve the absence of the power of adaptation, such as we find in some personal idiosyncrasy that carries the actor from one post to another without giving him firm root in any one enterprise. On the contrary, every community can cite a multitude of cases where merchant, banker, industrialist, politician, have breasted the waves of economic opposition and won against them every time. They have, indeed, learned the tricks of amassing wealth but failed to capture that capacious spirit which would enable them to lay up riches that endure. Education introduces striking contrasts. Consider, for example, the conversation of cultured men, conducted, let us say, in the presence of the successful externalist. Two worlds are in conflict, the everyday world with its customary modes of behavior, forms of association, types of religious feeling:

¹ "Works," Bohn edition, Vol. I, p. 6.

and, in strong contrast, the world of intellectual inquiry, where business maneuvers and political intrigues are mere illusions of sense, the high conceits of science and philosophy being the true subjects of discourse. Even in the case of the trained intelligence, the failure is so tragic at times as to merit the stinging rebuke of Heraclitus, "The Many do not take heed of such things as those they meet with, nor do they mark them when they are taught, *though they think they do.*"²

Wherein, then, does ignorance consist? Ignorance, we may agree, is a state of mind which does not perceive the value of law. It is the opposite of the scientific posture, which Russell describes as the "refusal to regard our desires, tastes, and interests as affording the key to understanding of the world."³ It is obvious at once that the powers of body and mind go unexamined by the great majority of human beings. The situation is not new. Plato observed the same phenomenon in the social intercourse of his day. "An uninspected life," he says in the "Apology," "is a worthless life." Few men take time to study the laws of physiology and psychology; if they did, a different program of behavior would be adopted. "Overexertion is apt to leave general neural disturbance behind it," a condition which forces upon the mind the somber fact that mere "cessation of muscular action is not repose." The present generation is afflicted with a state of "nerves," largely because it has disregarded or ignored the basic canons of organic reaction. Professor Stout goes on to prove that even "when sleep ensues it is apt to be attended by troubled dreams, in which we feel an uneasy continuance of previous effort."⁴ The experience is frequent and alarming. No society can long endure as a progressive force if it fails to honor the simplest principles of mental and physical hygiene. What is needed is not unimpeded relaxation, an enforced repose after intensified exertion, but a studied

² Quoted in Burnet, "Early Greek Philosophy," p. 147.

³ "Mysticism and Logic," p. 42.

⁴ G. F. Stout, "Analytic Psychology," II, 297.

analysis of the connection between effort on the one side and a projected adjustment on the other.

Again, precise knowledge of the physical environment is extremely meager. To be sure, there is a current tendency to give ample space in metropolitan journals and popular periodicals to the recital of scientific discoveries. But the interest of the public is a thin veneer; it has not penetrated the understanding mind. Dilettant specialists and literary pedants interlard their commonplace remarks with quotations about the relativity of motion or the positive charge of the atom, about the transmissibility of acquired traits or the early surroundings of the Piltdown man; but in private converse they admit the hold of ancient superstitions upon their emotions, such, for instance, as the dogma that disease is the sign of divine retribution or that man's tenure of life is dependent wholly on the sovereign decision of the Supreme Will. Fear-provoking beliefs like these tend to excite a repugnance to the concept of law that has made the acceptance of scientific knowledge slow and timorous.

Finally, ignorance has gripped with peculiar tenacity the relations of men in established society. It is a fixed conceit in the popular judgment that the human will is free, that it is endowed with autonomous power, that it cannot be limited or shaped or directed by environmental forces. To suppose that social evolution proceeds by definable laws seems to be a contradiction in terms. The suggestion of Comte that privately determined morality should be superseded by a scientific treatment of moral facts seems to many not only absurd but positively dangerous. They will not own that certain tendencies are bound to show themselves in the conduct of the group. The lessons from statistics are wholly disregarded. Statistics are said to be "impertinent;" they enter the shrine of conscience and demand submission. They destroy the authority which has hitherto been conferred upon personal choice. They convert social actions into the movements of a machine, stripped of responsibility and private initiative. Malthus' theory of population evoked a storm of disapproval. If population

increases by geometrical ratio, and the means of subsistence by mathematical ratio, there can be but one end for the race, namely, extinction. Under such conditions, personal effort could in no wise change the course of history. Hence, from the standpoint of common opinion, scientific law is wholly ineffective; it can only restrain, it should not try to lead.

What cure may education offer to the curse of ignorance? No infallible remedy is at hand, but a beginning can be made by a careful diagnosis of the needs. We are not here concerned with the formal methods pursued by the schools but rather with the temper in which the entire problem of instruction should be approached. The most notable advance in the past century has been the recognition of science and the scientific process as the "key to the understanding" of matters of immediate experience.

First (i), science has imposed upon education the necessity of analysis. The method is not wholly new; in the twilight of human inquiry, Greece learned how to abstract from observations the subtle meaning of the facts under examination. Then logic passed into the hands of men who had no data to study except the concepts of metaphysics. Analysis in the scientific sense was received with pronounced disfavor, and Roger Bacon was accused of an unholy alliance with the masters of the Black Art, because he sought to extract simple substances out of ordinary chemicals by the application of extreme artificial heat. Two events of major importance aided the cause of empirical analysis, the discovery of the electrolytic power of the magnetic charge and the invention of the microscope. From nonhuman sciences, analysis passed into the study of psychology, sociology, and ethics. It showed that human life embraces a series of self-acting impulses which can evoke a reaction in contact with appropriate stimuli. Russell is right when he says that "each impulse has its constitutional ministry of thought and knowledge and reflection through which possible conflicts of impulses are foreseen and temporary impulses are controlled by the unifying impulse which may be called

wisdom.”⁵ Likewise the social habits are analyzed into their respective origins and effects, and their course from the beginning traced with exactness. In short, the analytical method has converted the complacent contemplation of the whole event into a critical examination of its constitutive parts. This is the very end that education strives to reach; it has therefore found here an invaluable aid in defining motive and correcting process, in ridding its curriculum of unessential details and its teaching of dullness and mere repetitiousness.

Science has also (ii) imposed upon education the property of painstaking care in preparing the data from which conclusions are to be deduced. Data are individual facts culled from the wide spaces of nature. They cannot be taken in the mass, but must be subjected to minute and sustained scrutiny. Every new instance of the same general law presents variant qualities or conditions, all of which must be compared with cases already assembled and collated. In every field of learning which has been touched by the scientific method, unrelated dogmas have been shorn of their significance and either revamped or discarded. Thus, since the time of Lord Bacon, the theory of heat has been completely revolutionized; he found it in fetters to an ancient superstition which introduced a “caloric” into the body to account for the change of temperature. Now electrons of a certain velocity, accelerated by the approach of a heated body, carry, so to say, their temperature within themselves. Education itself has caught the spirit of the new method. It has studied the phenomena of the child’s behavior, tabulating the results of its experiments and stating its conclusions in tentative formulas which it can alter when new evidence is at hand. Furthermore, the effect of the method upon the moral program of society cannot fail to be salutary. It forestalls the attempt to regard any projected reform as likely to be swiftly realized. Thus, the extirpation of bribery, open or concealed, in the negotiations of commerce

⁵ “Mysticism and Logic,” p. 38.

or the transactions of politics, cannot be achieved by a stroke of magic. Bribery is a form of special privilege and surrenders only under duress. The history of the Turkish Empire is a standing witness to its grim tenacity. Scientific determination alone can rid business and the state of its insinuating poison.

One further (iii) property of science should be noted, namely, the objective character of its data. It excludes human passions and the "subjective apparatus" (Russell) they have organized. Religious and even philosophical judgments are creatures of impulse, feeling, caprice. Lord Bacon devotes one of his "idols" to their exposition. The researches of science dare not reflect the prepossessions of the experimenter; if they did, their validity would be in doubt and their appeal to the approval of mankind discredited. The personal equation cannot be completely removed, since science must employ human observers, speak in human language, and calculate the results of its experiments by the fallible processes of mathematics. Still, it can reduce foreign elements to their lowest terms and thus safeguard the deductions drawn from the inspected materials. By virtue of this attitude, later scientific inquiry has abandoned the authoritative tone which characterized its earlier pronouncements. The "absolute" of Newton is gone and is replaced by the "relative" of Einstein; the "necessary" of the Encyclopedists, by the "contingent" of Lord Kelvin's arguments. Education should take note of the change. Is it affirmed that instruction in the classics is the sole means for acquiring culture of mind and manners? Let educators consider that culture is never merely private regularity; it is the recognition of the objective values of truth, beauty, and honor. Science can aid powerfully in instituting a balance of judgment, which once the humanities alone were supposed able to produce. Our point is that nothing *absolute* in educational method or subject-matter exists; both are constantly changing to meet the new intellectual needs and to embrace the newly-conquered territories of knowledge.

2. Education, the Dissolver of Prejudice.

We turn now from the cognitive side of experience to a survey of its emotions. Education must commence with an emphasis upon the acquisition of knowledge. Plato insists that the beginning of wisdom consists, not in the number or intensity of our perceptions, but in the discrimination between two equally vivid yet contradictory impressions. Light and dark, hard and soft, cold and hot, are properties that demand the discovery of a common factor—color, texture, and temperature.⁶ But education also has its feeling-tones corresponding to its diversified reactions. Hence we must examine the facts of behavior, which carry with them either pleasurable approval or the pain of dissatisfaction. One of the difficult tasks confronting the preceptor is to learn how to regulate and control the emotional expressions of his pupils. Even primitive societies provide the rudiments of instruction as a check upon undisciplined passion. But the tempering of emotions does not imply that they have been or will be extinguished. On the contrary, a repressed baser appetite may be sublimated into a subtle sentiment like prejudice, whose capacity to do injury is exceedingly great. John Locke has described the baneful harvest that springs from this seed. He traces the course of its development and finds that in every case it depends for strength upon an unexamined maxim which is defended against every opponent. "If after all his professions he cannot bear any opposition to his opinion, if he cannot so much as give a patient hearing, much less examine or weigh the arguments on the other side, does he not plainly confess it is prejudice governs him?"⁷ These are wise and compelling words. They advise us that many of our opinions are rooted in certain affective, nonreflective states, not in the deep soil of demonstrated truth.

Strange as it may appear, the keenest instrument in shaping prejudice is the education ordained by the leaders of the group. This is a peculiarly strong temptation in demo-

⁶ "Republic," Bk. VII, 523.

⁷ "Conduct of the Understanding," Sec. 10.

cratic states which have agreed upon the principle of universal training. The devices by which a prejudiced state of mind is created are various and often insidious. Thus, textbooks on history must sustain the moral validity of every decision taken by the state. In American history, the Mexican War must be described as a triumph of pure motive in the release of a vast and important territory from the domination of a debased government. In England, the campaign against the Boers must be painted as a happy venture in the field of benevolent assimilation, an augury of the gradual merging of all states under the ægis of a common sense of liberty. Come what will, the principle of loyalty must be instilled in the minds of youth; and loyalty, so considered, usually means an unanalyzed sentiment seized upon by bigotry and unintelligent conservatism to forward their private ends. Still more menacing is the tendency of religious leaders to excite in immature minds a feeling of distrust of all persons or movements which deny the unproved assumptions of the given creed. The history of educational effort as a whole has not been favorable to the growth of scientific thought; hence, we ask how we can possibly erect a system of instruction that will surely destroy the authority and influence of prejudice.

The first concern is to study the nature and susceptibilities of human feeling. It is a common remark that sentiments conceived at an impressionable age are apt to last throughout life. Not only do they have the enduring quality that comes of early and deep incision into the plastic stuff of mind, but they acquire a special authority because received *before* the intellect can understand their meaning. Social constraints whose origins are lost in the mists of memory obtain for that reason a proportionately greater influence. The subject of these early sentiments may be rejected by our reason, but their right to command adherence is unquestioned. In view of these facts, it is fair for educators to shield the intelligence of their pupils from the mistaken zeal of patriot and religionist who attempt by symbol, song, and story to incorporate in the affections of

the children dogmas which they are not mature enough to comprehend. No system of training can bar the growth of emotion in the youthful mind; it would be criminal to seek to do so. We may and should, however, present for sympathetic attention only such subjects as suit the grade of mental development, reserving the principles that call for reasoned thought until study and experience have prepared the mind to make independent judgment as to their worth.

So much for the early training of emotions. Can we require the growing youth to submit every decision to the touchstone of reason and expect him to reject every constraint of feeling? Those who are privileged to guide the unfolding mind of the student know how strong is the influence of established sentiments derived from contact with family or group. The adult man yields a traditional opinion with even greater reluctance. Locke puts the situation thus: "To be indifferent [emotionally] which opinion is true is the right temper of the mind that preserves it from being imposed on, and disposes it to examine with that indifference, till it has done its best to find the truth, and this is the only direct and safe way to it."⁸ Thus, during his career as a college student, every young man is under obligation to examine any subject of study with care and detachment of mind. If the matter in hand be the principle of private property, it must be analyzed without regard to the sentiments of his associates. It is a duty of the instructor to present the opposing sides in every controversial field. Hence, so far as possible, the personal equation must be excluded. In certain delicate experiments in the physical laboratory, the breath of the operator may affect the results. In no case should an emotional inclination weight the balances of judgment against the truth. Especially is this caution needed for men who hold strong opinions and yet are obliged to pursue an analysis with impersonal impartiality. University teachers have a right to assume the reality of their academic freedom; but they cannot plead

⁸ "Conduct of the Understanding," Sec. 12.

that right as the ground for holding dogmas that in their essence would destroy the principles upon which rests their own institution or the group it serves. There is, to be sure, a sharp difference between reasons for believing a dogma and reasons for giving publicity to its terms. In neither experience should emotion be allowed to color the decision.

3. Education, the Enemy of Partiality.

The third effect of sound education lies in its treatment of the modern tendency towards specialization. Locke refers to this habit as a form of intellectual partiality. Speaking of mathematical specialists, he says: "They introduce lines and diagrams into their study of divinity and political inquiries, as if nothing could be known without them; and others, accustomed to retired speculations, run natural philosophy [science] into metaphysical notions and abstract generalities of logic."⁹ We may allow that the body of scientific knowledge was restricted in Locke's day, and men were not tempted to limit their research to a small area. In the bewildering mass of scientific information now available, the experimenter is under compulsion to settle upon a single field of study. Exact and authoritative results can be obtained only from detailed, intensive analysis. The strange truth then appears that men who become expert in one direction assume (perhaps unconsciously) that they are equally prepared to render an opinion on some unrelated subject. Locke admonishes his reader not to transfer to another science what he has found useful in one, lest it should "perplex and confound the understanding." Blunders of this sort have been made by distinguished scholars; thus, Ernst Haeckel wrote a work on the "Riddle of the Universe," although he knew but a small part of its contents, namely, the data of biology. More amusing blunders are committed by men of technical or commercial knowledge who presume to pass judgment on the value of history as a scientific discipline or on the meaning of economic laws,

⁹ *Ibid.*, Sec. 24.

which they see in an extremely restricted sphere. It is not forbidden to the lay mind to inquire into the causes of events, but it is the opinion of specialists in the field that counts in determining the body of knowledge. There is thus a distinct place in present-day scholarship for highly trained experts; they must, however, learn not to carry their "lines and diagrams" into other departments of learning.

We may apply the caution of Locke to the matter of education. Historical records show that two types of curricula have striven for the mastery in every civilized race. Shall culture or vocation be the aim of formal instruction in the schools? Plato met the question with engaging frankness. "You amuse me," said Socrates to Glaucon, "by your evident alarm lest the crowd should think that you insist upon useless studies."¹⁰ Why, for example, should one give attention to astronomy—to equip himself to be a good farmer or an expert navigator or a resourceful general? These are ends of great value to mankind; but, in the judgment of the Master, education has a different primary aim; it seeks to inaugurate harmony of intellectual action. All other ends are spurious as compared with this. The issue is joined in Plato's age and our own. Which is the true motive for education to adopt? One group of theorists argue that schools are remiss in their duty if they do not "produce capable commercial men or experts in foreign languages or scientists or engineers." A recent English writer has examined this thesis with singular clarity and without personal bias. He answers the criticism that English schools have failed in their response to social needs:

But there is a real *suggestio falsi* in the criticism. For its implication is that the business of the school is to export, as nearly as possible, the finished article in all these activities, to equip its boys and girls to step at once into some position in the industrial and commercial world. That implication—so far as it affects this preliminary stage of education—is thoroughly mischievous. The

¹⁰ "Republic," Bk. VII, 527.

business of the school is simpler, and far more difficult. It is to develop personality.¹¹

It stands to reason that the undivided acceptance of either theory is a clear case of partiality. We may agree with the humanists that discipline of mind and acquaintance with the great ideas of philosophy and science constitute the real grounds of education; or we may argue with the vocationalist that the sole valid incentive is the stark necessity of making a living. How then shall we choose? The plain fact is that we do not choose, that we do not need to choose. The current maxim that "life is more than making a living" is not a bit of scholastic cant; it is the verdict of approved experience. Two demands are set before every intelligent citizen: first, to support the processes of physical existence, and, second, to develop the peculiarly human capacity called reflection. To meet the former, an intricate kind of preparation is laid down, especially for such vocations as law and medicine, where the pursuit of liberal studies is a *sine qua non* of ultimate success. To meet the latter in a democratic state, every youth or maiden who has the capacity and will is entitled to prolonged training in arts and letters and should have the way opened for the fulfillment of ambition. Only by this method can the state prepare a company of cultivated thinkers to settle the impending problems of social progress.

But the sanction is not merely collective; it is also personal. The supreme asset in a nation's life is the character of its citizens, and character can be produced through but one channel. Both kinds of education are needed to reach the desired end. Refined tastes enable men to pursue their vocation with a disciplined insight into its place in human welfare. Rough contacts with the practical tasks of the world yield new interpretations of the basic rules of conduct. Life becomes a continuous study, and service will surely cancel the partiality which Locke condemns as an

¹¹ Hetherington and Muirhead, "Social Purpose," p. 213.

undesirable state of mind. It is never so undesirable as in the councils of social education.

4. Education as Antidote to Anarchy.

We may examine once more the thesis that education is the "main concern of the state," this time from the standpoint of the social order. Why is education a natural sanction to civil authority? The argument cannot proceed without a prior assumption, namely, that the concept of the state implies a unity of interests sustained and interpreted by common bonds. Race and religion have been proposed as satisfying the terms of the equation. But neither is socially integrative; both are, in fact, divisive. The perpetual warfare among the Balkan kingdoms and the Thirty Years War in Germany furnish ample evidence of the fallacy of the claim. Nor can economic values establish solidarity in the state. The success of Russian communism is still in grave doubt. Unity in state action rests upon one of two foundations, a thoroughly organized army or an educated electorate. Both sanctions bid fair to persist simultaneously for many generations to come, yet education must ultimately prevail as the sole effective organ of civic unity. Force can never compel a people to change its mode of thought; on the other hand, education, the culture of the mind, may so alter the habits of action that in due time police measures will command a greatly diminished share of public attention.

How, then, can education produce harmony? History shows that, when a traditional sanction is removed, a condition of anarchy supervenes. Anarchy is, in logic, the obverted form of unity. Let us begin with the processes of reflection, which Plato represents as a powerful dialectic requiring an immediate synthesis of ideas, if we are to escape the toils of confusion. This state of mind he calls "insubordination."¹² Thus, if the current definition of justice—obedience to established law—be rejected and no new principle be recognized, men are bound to fall into serious

¹² "Republic," Bk. VII, p. 537,—trans. by Davies and Vaughan.

excesses. Anarchy begins in the soul; it asserts that two consentient ideas cannot be found; hence, we may act as we please. In the "waste-wide anarchy of chaos" which Milton pictures so graphically, logical sequences are quite unknown. There is no law of mental behavior, no major premise upon which a true system of knowledge may be built. Because of chaos in thinking, there is also anarchy in the conduct of life. Pleasure as a principle of moral action is ineffective; for two men cannot agree upon the meaning of pleasure or what things should and must excite agreeable reactions. Plato boldly argues that feelings have always failed to produce order, and will always fail. Education may, in part, dwell upon the need of discipline of human sentiments; but, as we have seen, sentiments must be informed by true and coherent ideas, else, like a chameleon, they will change their color with every change of circumstance. In short, education must do two things for the individual—it must teach him (a) how to think and (b) some of the things he must think about.

Can education prevent the appearance of social anarchy, or, if it exists, take the lead in removing it? Confusion of any sort is cancelled by putting order in its place. Thus, the irregular growths of a waste field may be plowed under and seed sown in the uniform rows prescribed by the mechanism of the tractor. We do not suggest that social confusion may or should be treated in similar fashion; the intelligence of the man or group resists it. For example, after the dynamic dialectic of war is completed, the synthetic principles that are adopted will be the outgrowth of the new needs, not an artificial system of government that gives no consideration to the temperament or traditions of the community. Again, in the decisions which smaller communities must make as the result of some local upheaval in politics or business or some physical change like a destructive fire, wise words and prudent counsels rather than revolutionary programs should be the groundwork of the new synthesis. In these cases, education already enjoyed by the citizens will prove its worth. "Knowledge," said Washington, "is in every

country the surest basis of happiness," especially when the constituted authorities are in direct communication with the people.

Therefore we may properly seek to inquire what *type* of education ought to be followed. Will the training of a "competent civil service" be the true end of instruction? Critics of the English system freely admit that the preparation of men and women for the important, though sometimes menial, positions under the government must be severe and thorough.¹³ Yet they feel justified in asking whether social unity will be obtained in that way. A certain technical unity results—unity in military administration, in the interpretation of the law, even in the assembling of economic resources during an emergency. Is this sufficient? Is not the true order of the state grounded in the organization of moral ideas about a great overshadowing concept like justice? There can be no public order *if the citizens themselves be not ordered*. Education demands a new substance of thought, not a new scientific method. It is the science of philosophy, not of the laboratory, that must now be subsidized for principles and truths. Here it is not vocational expertness nor wealth of knowledge nor the achievements of art nor the triumphs of political skill that count; it is the acceptance of the primary laws of honesty, veracity, benevolence. Unity lies in these virtues.

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CHAPTER VII

THE ÆSTHETIC APPEAL

We enter now the precincts of another kind of sanction and must study a new set of mental facts. By good right, we should face at once the crucial question whether art has any necessary and persistent relations with moral values. We rarely come upon a systematic appreciation of the elements of beauty without meeting a lively discussion of the theme. Tolstoi introduces it into the first chapter of his "What is Art?" arguing that any task which "demands tremendous labors from the people" should have a clearer definition than is usually accorded it. Guyau, the French æsthetician, has written an instructive treatise on the sociological aspects of the artistic impulse. He quotes the remark of Balzac that "beauty without expression is merely an imposture," meaning that the spontaneous sentiments of any given period are reflected in the conspicuous works of art, as, for example, in Demosthenes' orations against the pretensions of Philip of Macedon. In a broader sense, some authors allege that beauty and goodness are interchangeable terms. No work of art can be beautiful without conveying the ideas of true morality; conversely, no good act can be performed without furnishing material for artistic composition. In short, both extremes of æsthetic theory are unacceptable—"art for art's sake" and art only for its moral lessons—since neither recognizes the identity of beauty and virtue as an unanalyzable factor in every statue, picture, or poem.

But such a judgment is certainly exaggerated; it deprives the æsthetic appeal of much of its force as a sanction in supporting the edicts of moral law. It proceeds on the assumption that, as a recent writer says, "moral law is essentially

an inner law, an innate bent of the human mind towards the good in general.”¹ There is nothing in the historic sweep of human culture to warrant the assumption unless it be qualified, as Don Luigi admits, by the outward expressions of moral value in “the precepts and enactments of religion and law.” Sound judgment, a sense of beauty, and regard for the established canons of justice are potentially involved in every individual or social decision. What we may justly challenge and seek to refute is the principle that all art is in fetters to the cold mastery of moral law. At the same time, it is futile to suppose that any art can be successful apart from the refining touch of logic or ethics. “Superficiality in art,” says the same critic, “is the beginning of falsity, and all falsity is fundamentally ugly.” No artist can scorn the rules of his craft without damaging the intrinsic worth of his production and, by the same token, warping the qualities of his moral life.

Yet, in general, the criteria of truth, beauty, and goodness should be kept strictly separate, each as a foil for the other. For the demands we have made on art may, with equal propriety, be applied to the terms of a logical argument. Thus, whatever we think of the substance of his doctrine, the schematic structure of one of Thomas Aquinas’ dissertations on theology or ethics is an artistic creation of the first importance. We have in another connection explained the dramatic features in an act of heroism, which, without the luster of an idealized situation, still excites the same feelings of sublimity that a natural phenomenon or an epical rehearsal in Dante would evoke. There is, in truth, a close relationship between the ultimate values of thought, but they must be sharply distinguished in reckoning the meaning of a specific form of behavior.

1. The Aesthetic Impulse and Moral Stimulus.

We begin with the attitude of the artist in which the properties of beauty are copiously registered. Is it true—

¹ Don Luigi Sturzo, in *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1928, p. 55.

speaking negatively—that an unmoralized mind, or one that has but dimly caught the significance of moral values, cannot create forms and movements that shall reflect the unmistakable grace and charm of their natural equivalents? The problem is one of grave importance and should be studied in its twofold bearings.

(a) First, can a person of artistic skill trace his desire to paint the deep blue of the sky, the gray velocity of flying clouds, the soft green hues of the grass, wholly to his love of color and the irrepressible assimilation of nature into his own feelings? No doubt, the soul of the creator is subtly infused into the object under inspection. Theodor Lipps has called the process an *Einfühlung*, a *feeling-in*, a projecting of our sensations and sentiments into the congenial forms at hand.² There is no necessary change in the physical form of our body when we describe the mountain as raising its massive bulk to the sky. The experience is strictly mental, and it is the same when we view the Doric column which “rears itself up” somewhat as a man lifts a heavy weight to his shoulder. In like manner, the æsthetic mind identifies its movements with the flow of the tide or the sweep of the wind. Man and nature are at one; man and his skilled creations are united. The moods of the sea are the changeful aspects of human interests; the murmurs of the forest are the ceaseless complaints of an unsatisfied heart. Pan is the symbol of æsthetic abandon, of the natural creature, of the canceling of those qualities that tend to make an artist strictly human, that is, that suggest reflection and moral aim.

Is such an attitude possible? Can any one, under the spell of an intuition of beauty, detach his actions completely from the domination of moral character? No figure could more exactly represent the rush of nature’s forces in their inward impulsion than the statue of the Winged Victory in the Louvre gallery. Who the sculptor was and what was his private thought, no historian of art can tell; but the

² “Grundlegung der Ästhetik,” p. 126, *et seq.*

most critical observer never questions the aptness of the title by which it is universally known. Granting that the title is correct, are we justified in saying that the artist simply "let himself go" in his desire to repeat the motions and changes of the physical world? Is there no moral conception which he strove to carve into the hard-yielding surface of the marble? Victory is not a symbol derived from unmoralized matter; it is found in the quest of an established character. May we universalize the principle by holding that all arts tend to reflect the moral temper of the artist? Thus, is music capable of sounding the notes of obligation, expectation, human faith, at the behest of the inspired performer? If music be one of the ultimate arts, which some have categorically denied, can its pulsing tones be aught else than the mimicking echoes of bird or zephyr or sighing tree? Or, if we start from the experience of the human agent, can melody do anything more than embody the fundamental emotions—love, hate, disappointment, chagrin—which men have in common with the brute? Browning has his own answer to the query, as all readers of "Abt Vogler" will recall:

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by.

Still, the answer is by no means generally accepted; plenty of artists protest that their creations have no moral purpose whatsoever. They even go so far as to announce themselves utterly *unmoral*—without knowledge of the elementary ideas of justice, benevolence, or any other civil virtue. Oscar Wilde would probably be included in this class. The opinion, however, is exaggerated; it is a mistaken attempt to trace the source of æsthetic intuition to the

diversified feelings of the body. Shelley thought that he threw logic and the moral sanctities to the winds in his "Revolt of Islam." Commenting on the poem, he himself says, "I am formed, if for anything not in common with the herd of mankind, to apprehend the minute and remote distinctions of feelings, whether relative to external nature or the living beings that surround us." But in the next breath he declares that such concepts spring directly from "considering the moral or material universe as a whole." He admits that the "faculties which comprehend all that is sublime in man" exist very imperfectly in his own mind; and the admission grants the principal point of our contention, namely, that no human act can in the end be evaluated apart from the general motives of moral behavior. It is certainly untrue to hold that beauty and goodness are of equal merit in every æsthetic choice; it is true to say that behind every decision in logic or art the moral aim of the agent is a factor that cannot be abruptly dispossessed of its rights.

(b) We turn to the other side of the picture, and inquire whether an impure man can express his thoughts in the medium of beauty and grace. The case cannot be proved by an examination of the abstract terms. Is there a natural antithesis between knowledge of artistic form and ability to distinguish justice from injustice, honesty from dishonesty? The answer may hinge upon what we mean by moral motive. If Shelley defies the Senate of the University and boldly issues his pronunciamento in favor of atheism, is this act charged with a base and vicious intent? If later he abandons his lawful wife because of a positive attraction for another woman, is he to be hailed as a wicked husband and dangerous citizen? In concrete cases which are determined by the spontaneous and unregulated functioning of what we call the artistic temper, can we say that the artist disqualifies himself as a conductor of æsthetic inspiration because of his egregious lapses from the common standards of morality? Many still living can remember the horror with which singularly virtuous people regarded the association of George Eliot and George Henry Lewes, when Lewes' wife

was by writ of law confined to the madhouse. Personal defects, they argued, vitiate all products of art.

But the problem cannot be solved by a series of *a priori* judgments, no matter how convincing their logic. Induction is the sole test of truth here. Can men whose private life is stained by serious faults suddenly seize the celestial flame of beauty and light their verse or canvas with its luminous fires? It must be conceded that the harsher vices, demonic obliquities, coarser sins, are not congenial to the artist's temperament. In the corrupt courts of Europe, the poet and painter often stand apart as models of self-restraint in the midst of riotous moral confusion. Still, examples are not lacking where the gifted artist is the victim of a Jekyll-Hyde alternation—beauty now dominant, then the ugliness of surrender to the seductions of evil. Professor Everett is no doubt right in maintaining that the "sense of beauty cannot remain apart from the sense of conduct,"³ but how beauty can set up its imperial claims in characters that are seamed with vicious tendencies is a question that yields no satisfactory reply. Robert Burns and Edgar Allan Poe and Benvenuto Cellini, the famous worker in metal, are intricate riddles for the æsthetic monist to unravel. Can a man be a devout disciple of the Muses and still obey the most primitive instincts of indulgence or revenge? Or is conduct justified by the fact that it faithfully reflects the moral values of the day? Art is a strong and vigorous sanction when rightly understood, and in the long run will persuade its votaries to supplement the beauties of sense by the "beauty of holiness." But there is nothing in the two impulses to require that one should always be accompanied by the other. Reflection and experience alone can effect the union.

2. Moral Concepts as Aesthetic Materials.

The second question is the use of moral ideas as the medium for the expression of beauty. Is this a possible procedure? Does art consist in reasoned judgment as to the

³ "Moral Values," p. 207.

meaning of a given subject? It is usually assumed that an æsthetic intuition is a direct and complete apprehension of the whole, without analysis and without qualification. The simplest theory is that of *imitation*, which Plato proposes in the third book of the "Republic" and which Schiller describes under the title of "æsthetic semblance." Its essence is this: We are confronted with an object which seems to possess certain elements of charm, and we seek to reproduce it on canvas or in marble. We do not expect to reflect the substantial reality of the body; we aim merely to extract a likeness in a different medium. The more exact the likeness, the more beautiful will be the image presented. At the same time, the keen sense of balance in Plato's mind prevents him from accepting the suggestion that beauty, in this account, is the geometrically precise recovery of the original form and movement, and that if we can obtain a true measurement in every case we shall have reached the maximum of beautiful expression. He admits in other passages, as in the "Phædo," that form and meaning cannot be dissevered. "A man of sense ought not to say, nor will I be too confident, that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true." Beauty does not reside in reproduction but in interpretation. Hence, there is room at once for conceptual symbols. The æsthetic impulse is not bound to explain the scientific uses of the imaged object, for example, a tree, brook, ship, but its meaning as an instrument in producing a deep sense of satisfaction in the creating artist or the responsive observer.⁴

Chief among the concepts which the mind is obliged to contemplate is the significance and place of moral actions. Primitive art begins its task by copying the common forms met in immediate perceptual contacts—rocks, plants, animals, implements of warfare, tools of the chase or the cave. Human faces soon awaken interest, and the fleeting expressions indicate distinctions of moods and fancies. The artist in

⁴ The reader may consult Bosanquet's "History of Æsthetic" for a good discussion of the subject.

crude fashion essays to ask what the subject *meant* by the sudden flash of light in the eye or the concentrated frown on the brow. When the summit of creative genius is reached, as in the golden age of Greece, it is an admitted fact in art that traits of mind and the basic motives of conduct can be embodied in any sort of æsthetic medium. Thus, the familiar group of Laocoön and his sons emblemizes in a striking manner certain of the fundamental emotional and moral responses. The evidences of pain, the self-sacrifice of the father, his efforts to relieve the distress of his children, terrorized as they are by the slowly increasing pressure of the serpents, the sense of inevitable subjugation to the mastery of fate, are indelibly engraved upon the marble. In fine, the entire gamut of moral ideas may be included in the sweep of artistic inspiration. The domestic virtues in the "Odyssey," the heroic valor of the chieftains in the "Iliad," the charms of women—*das ewig weibliche*—and men's bitter struggles to possess them, the sublime devotion of Iphigenia in Taurus, the brutal and irrational revenge falling on undeserving heads as in "Othello," the covetousness of Shylock, the homely satisfactions of the Dutch family as portrayed in Gerard Dou's "Young Mother"—these are the original materials from which the immortal objects of beauty have sprung. They imply that art has strong and vigorous sanctions in its subject-matter as well as in the æsthetic attitude of its creators. We need but to study in detail the concepts enshrined in Rembrandt's noble painting, "The Night Watch," in order to perceive the congruity existing between moral principle and æsthetic expression. A host of common virtues are there inscribed—rugged determination, orderly march, due preparation for defense, alertness of attention, unity of purpose registered in loyalty to the appointed leader, in some faces an intuition of the lighter sentiments. Who can study the variety and intensity of moral motives without feeling that art was made to interpret the finer values of human behavior? The extraordinary skill of the artist in handling the lights and shadows of the picture would by itself mark the work as

one of the greatest triumphs of art. When to his skill is added the splendor of the subject, we can no longer doubt the kinship of moral power and sensuous harmony in the development of human interests.

Two perplexing problems here require consideration. First, is art a conscious medium for the communication of moral truth? That is, is the purpose of the fine arts strictly pedagogic? Painting and literature have dealt successfully with the intricacies of moral emotion. Shall we hold that the treatment is formally intended or that it is an incidental by-product not included in the original intention? Plato insists that art performs its true function only when it conveys exact and valid knowledge. All other aims are tangential and without worth. This interpretation has been haughtily denied by the aristocrat in art. Art, he protests, exists for itself; to import an ethical program into its counsels is to destroy its autonomous character. The "Surrender of Breda," one of Velasquez' masterpieces of sustained motion and static pose, is not merely the depiction of an historic scene; it is the distillation of excelling genius. Hence, art cannot be said to "teach lessons;" it has nothing to teach. Art has but one aim, the objectification of beauty in any medium congenial to the skill and ideal of the artists.

We have no desire to settle an issue which Havelock Ellis seems to regard as merely academic.⁵ There are certain forms of æsthetic expression which have a clear intention to instruct, but it is doubtful whether they register the undiluted principles of beauty. The orations of Cicero, the sermons of Bossuet, the didactic poems of Dryden and Pope, the second part of Goethe's "Faust," the huge military canvases of Vereschagin, are examples of the practice where subject comes first in esteem and the artistic habili-ments last. There are, to be sure, cases of genuine art where the moral teachings appear in the body of the text, without detriment to the æsthetic surroundings. Ibsen's "Ghosts" preaches the doctrine of retribution, his "Doll's

⁵ "The Dance of Life," p. 346.

House" demands the release of women from their age-long subjection. We may admit the claim. We may agree that it is the absence of the inspired quality of art that makes the "Essay on Man" so insufferably dull, although rich in quotable passages. Let us further agree that when the second part of "Faust" is read as a commentary on the dramatic events of the first, much of the beauty of the one is reflected in the professional discourses of the other. But when all reservations have been made, there still remains a substantial distinction between art as a conscious teacher and art as a supreme expression of human feeling. Jules de Gaultier proclaims an important truth when he says, "Art is in a certain sense the only morality which life admits."⁶ The "certain sense" means that all endeavor is endowed with æsthetic perspective, and for this reason we may speak of the manual arts, the art of teaching, the relation of science and art. When, therefore, ethical concepts are studied by the artist, he subjects them to the same analysis as any other ideas, for example, geometrical figures, the movements of physical bodies, the discrimination of colors. His medium is different from the preacher's or the publicist's; there is no simple appeal—"ye must believe"—but a subtle, harmonious fusing of common moral thoughts with the superlative beauties of the artist's ideal.

This brings us to the second problem, which we may formulate thus: How shall the sinister facts of moral conduct be employed in the province of art? The answer of Plato is categorical: "The absence of grace and rhythm and harmony is closely allied to an evil style and an evil character."⁷ Hence, all immoral traits and actions must be excluded, not excepting Homer's treatment of the offenses of the gods—rape, hypocrisy, falsehood, and slander. But the true æsthetic principle was first expounded by St. Augustine. Ugliness of any sort is merely a foil to the beautiful whole of painting or poem. Genius will deal alike with moral sins and with moral excellences, but genius must

⁶ Quoted by Havelock Ellis, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

⁷ "Republic," Bk. II, 401; trans. by Davies and Vaughan.

never color sins with so attractive a guise that they will be mistaken for virtues. It is not possible to lay down that sin is in itself æsthetically ugly; the two types of thought, moral and artistic, are essentially distinct. But we may adopt the principle that, when moral error is to be portrayed, the deduction drawn by the most uncritical observer should never be that it possesses a glamor that warrants us in imitating its terms in real life. We may not go so far as Don Luigi Sturzo and claim that a "true work of art is always moral; immoral meaning in expression always reveals itself as an artistic defect to the point of making the work anti-æsthetic and ugly."⁸ But we are on safe ground when we affirm that harmony of moral conduct is the only form of behavior that eventually lends itself to satisfactory reproduction in the medium of beauty. This may be due to the principle that beauty involves the associated ideas which the agent brings to the appreciation of art. We shall consider its application later.

How far shall we sacrifice the spontaneities of art to the demands of morality? Santayana states the case succinctly:

Our sense of practical benefit not only determines the moral value of beauty, but sometimes its existence as an æsthetic good. Especially in the right *selection* of effects, these considerations have weight. Forms in themselves pleasing may become disagreeable when the practical interests then uppermost in the mind cannot, without violence, yield a place to them. Thus too much eloquence in a diplomatic document, or in a familiar letter, or in a prayer, is an offense not only against practical sense, but also against taste.⁹

We should be on our guard against a too literal evaluation of the word "practical." It has little to do with the examples mentioned by Santayana or with the common interests of commerce, industry, or simple domestic arrangements. "All that morality can require is the inward harmony of each life," and any agency which contributes to that end

⁸ In *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1928, p. 61.

⁹ "The Sense of Beauty," p. 219.

may be summoned to the aid of the moral program. Letters and the plastic arts have a peculiar value in this field. Their subjects should be limited only by the necessities of the moral law. The principle is tolerably clear, though its application is uncertain. For who shall decide which aspects of art are repugnant to the moral sense? Tastes change, and judgments with them. The nudity of modern art would have been thoroughly reprehensible to the Puritan conscience. The "sense of practical benefit" can refer only to the seasoned judgment of posterity. We may profitably submit our expressions of taste to contemporaneous thinkers of another race and culture; but the criticism is merely formal, never convincing; it is frequently resented as prejudiced or as alien to our mode of thought, and hence without worth. Severe self-analysis and sympathetic deference to good social opinion form the best basis for determining how far moral canons should limit the activities of the daring artist.

3. The Moral Influence of Art.

There are three angles from which a work of art is to be judged; we have considered the first two, and now turn to the third, namely, its effect upon the moral sense of the percipient. Tragic events and critical conditions give rise at times to an enlargement of the æsthetic imagination; thus, Wordsworth composed his "Prelude" amid the agitations of the French Revolution. Is the converse true? May well-defined moral effects be traced to some great artistic creation? It has been alleged, for one thing, that an intelligent appreciation of the beauties of art will sooner or later change the moral habits of the social group. Ruskin is cited in support of the thesis, "To teach taste is inevitably to form character." Ruskin put his formula to the test by lecturing before "workingmen's institutes" on the problems and fascinations of art, but the results were not encouraging. He did not critically examine all the elements of the situation; he did not, for instance, distinguish, as Aristotle did, between the momentary play of feelings and solid

grasp on moral beliefs. The doctrine of *katharsis* is a case in point. Fear for the fate of the hero or sympathy with his multiplied sorrows elicited a response that stirred the observer to the depths. Modern critics who have sat through the tense hours of the "Passion Play" at Ober-Ammergau can testify to the reality of the purificatory process. The reserve emotions are released, and even Anglo-Saxon eyes grow misty with feeling. If by "teaching taste" Ruskin means that the modern mind shivers at the cry of revenge or recoils from the bloody knife of hate or warms to the glowing approaches of love, then he is at one with Aristotle in analyzing the psychological factors in behavior.

But Aristotle went much further than that. Tragedy can teach the sublime lessons of restraint and justice, but it does not teach them by cultivating the æsthetic taste; it sets forth definite and cogent examples. Experience does not demonstrate that good taste will "inevitably" save the moral soul. The age of Lorenzo the Magnificent was instinct with the most refined temper of art. Michael Angelo, and after him Raphael, earned the plaudits of the awed and silent multitude, but they did not erase the vulgar meanness of the public mind. They caught the fancy and approval of the reigning princes, but they could not save Savonarola from consignment to the consuming flames because he dared to expose the official corruption of state and church. Art, unassisted by rational judgment, is unable to excite a passion for goodness in the human breast. Virtue becomes beauty in precisely the way that virtue becomes knowledge. Men acquire virtue not by the amplitude of their scientific information but by an acquaintance with the fundamental laws of life. Men win virtue not by bathing their souls in the atmosphere of beauty but by emulating the order and symmetry of beautiful objects in the discharge of their daily duties.

But the essential value of art to morals lies in the fact that its beauty can be contemplated and understood. Beauty is not mere feeling; it is thought, and thought proceeds by the logical unfolding of ideas. Hence, beauty that cannot be

understood has none of the evocatory power of genuine art; it is only a simulacrum of art, that is, artificiality. This was the vision of Keats as he ends his apostrophe to the Grecian urn:

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty; that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

The pragmatic interpretation of these lines by Marshall is quite perverse.¹⁰ Truth does not refer to the positive reality of the imaged thing nor to a questionable fact that all things and movements in the world are endowed with beauty. Truth here is the association of all congenital ideas that go to make the handiwork of Greece an object of enduring charm. It is at this point that the strong and vigorous sanctions of art come again to the fore. No object that arrests the delighted attention of the observer can have its charm explained merely by the symmetry of its lines or the witchery of its colors. Beauty is deeper than figurative design. Thus, the Parthenon sitting in majesty upon its Acropolitian hill has just the properties that render its dimensional relations replete with beauty. Its impressive columns, its noble entablature, its sense of massiveness, its perfect proportions—nothing is wanting to extract from the spectator a cry of unaffected admiration. Yet for the Greek, significant as these technical excellences were, its stately form was joined to the imperishable glory of his race and name. Athena built the city, and to her honor was raised this glorious monument. We may suspect that such unrevealed beauty caught the eye of the poet as he further wrote:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.

The rule is therefore universal. Human science cannot calculate what the culture of Europe would have been with-

¹⁰ H. R. Marshall, "The Beautiful," p. 305.

out the Gothic spires that leap from consecrated and inspired hands into the open reaches of the sky. But the glories of Rheims or Chartres or Lincoln would be as wasted harmonies on the desert air, if to their pointed arches and springing buttresses and superbly molded portals had not been added the silent faith of a devout auditory. Beauty is truth because beauty is unfolded in concordant ideas, the symbols of the soul's desire for unity. Let no one protest that the æsthetic appeal is not needed to awaken emotional responses such as this. Nor let him complain that the association of kindred ideas tends to obscure the element of beauty and rob it of its intrinsic rights. Both comments are wrong. The subtle reactions of beauty are felt at every hearthstone where Spenser's "Faërie Queene" is read by the glow of the evening fire, while the praise of maidenly fidelity, knightly valor, the overthrow of base deceit, the triumph of true love, have hushed the fears of a myriad of listeners and lured them to high and holy endeavors. Conceive for a moment how the same practical conceits would sound in the slow halting sentences of prose, and the skeptical critic may well at length agree that the bearer of beauty is a guide to duty. Art and morals unite in the spiritual marriage of honor and truth.

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CHAPTER VIII

RELIGION AND MORALS

We have assumed throughout this volume that human values may be classified under two heads: constitutive values, or the ultimate modes of reflective appreciation; and contributory values, or forms of thought which impinge at once on practical behavior. The third and last of the constitutive values embodies a type of universal idea different from the principles of logic or the laws of ethics. This universal idea presents a unity of apprehension which is interpreted, now by the impulse of beauty, again by the canons of holiness. For beauty of sense and the beauty of holiness are controlled by the same primordial quality, namely, reverence; and both go back to the strong emotional reactions which enable the subject to identify himself with the object of his attention. The mystic rapture of the poet is not far from the inspired transfiguration of the saint.

In the foregoing chapter we examined the notable points in which the influence of art has made itself felt in directing the affections and choices of the moral intelligence. It is our purpose now to do the same service for the other and higher phase of æsthetic consciousness. There is no need to argue for the historic reality of the religious sanctions. Both the ethnic and the positive forms of faith begin with the predicate of authority. Religion has evinced neither diffidence nor fear in the presentation of its claims; it has taken for granted their unassailable validity. In fact, it has at times exalted its authority above the mandates of other human ends—logic, morals, or statecraft. We propose to consider here a single fact in religious consciousness—on what level it meets the experiences of the moral agent, and how the two sets of values may be united.

1. Genetic Relations of Religion and Morals.

A certain degree of light will be thrown on the situation by determining the order in which the two forms of conscious thought appeared. Did religion precede morals, or morals, religion; or did they have an independent origin according to the natural capacity of the race? The problem is not alone for the researches of anthropology, since the evidence there obtained is often capable of the most contradictory interpretation. It belongs of right to the domain of psychology, and may be formulated in these words: How does the mind treat the stimuli that give rise at length to the concepts of moral order and religious faith?

(a) The first theory holds that religion is the primary element of experience, and moral behavior is shaped agreeably to its terms. Durkheim, the leader of the French sociological school, believes that "religion contains in itself, from the beginning, but in a confused state, all the elements which, in dissociating themselves, in combining in a thousand different ways with each other, have given birth to the various manifestations of the collective life."¹ He is supported by Wundt, who argues that "all moral precepts originally possess the character of religious commands."² However, a few pages further on Wundt qualifies his opinion by alleging that neither of these values has genetic priority, but that both have worked together to produce the imperatives of the matured moral consciousness. From another angle, Rashdall convinces himself that religious enthusiasm on the level of reflective civilization inevitably gets expressed in conduct: "The value of religious belief and religious emotion lies chiefly in their tendency to promote right action."³ It may therefore be deduced that, while morality does not originate in religious ritual, it is powerfully stimulated by the sense of obligation to a superior being implied in the act of worship. In either case,

¹ Quoted by Bouglé in "Evolution of Values," trans. by H. S. Sellars, p. 120.

² "The Facts of the Moral Life," trans. by Gulliver and Titchener, p. 121.

³ "Theory of Good and Evil," Vol. II, p. 297.

the source of moral energy lies hidden in the impulses of religion, as is attested on the one side by the history of the Hebrew peoples and on the other by the new type of virtues—patience, love, and humility—developed by the Christian church. That this theory does not explain all the facts will appear in the sequel.

(b) The second theory reverses the order and finds the genesis of religion in the elementary ideas of morality. Here the preconceptions of many inquirers have unduly colored their conclusions. It may be possible to deny any privileged position for religious values in human thinking, as Marx and his Russian disciples have done, but it seems quite illegitimate to cancel all moral qualities even in a strictly economic state. We may, in the manner of Descartes, “think away” the supports of religion, but we cannot give up the meaning of moral behavior without at the same time destroying human consciousness. Hence, many men have argued that morals must have the priority. This becomes increasingly clear if we adopt the definition of Frazer that “religion is the propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to men which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.”⁴ Reflective thought is required to reach a decision such as this, and the only ground on which reflection may proceed is experience dealing with similar materials on the lower range of moral contacts. If we bow to the strong men in the group and try to obtain their favor, we may do the same for the imagined divinities of the forest or the sky.

But a more subtle exposition of the theory awaits us. Matthew Arnold thinks that religion is concerned wholly with the *practical*, as expressed in conduct. He does not debate the matter in a formal way, but his assumption seems to be that moral behavior comes first and the religious impulse follows. If morality be “three-fourths of life,” then religion cannot be more than one-fourth; and since we are obliged to make room for science, philosophy,

⁴“Golden Bough,” abridged edition, p. 50.

and art, as well as general culture, it would seem mathematically to reduce to an even smaller quantum. From such an awkward situation, the critic escapes by defining religion as "morality touched with emotion."

But is there, therefore, no difference between what is ethical, or morality, and religion? There is a difference; a difference of degree. Religion, if we follow the intention of human thought and human language in the use of the word, is ethics heightened, enkindled, lit up, by feeling; the passage from morality to religion is made clear when to morality is applied emotion. And the true meaning of religion is thus, not simply *morality*, but *morality touched with emotion*.⁵

The difficulties suggested by this definition are serious. It is open to question whether the phrase Arnold uses is a precise scientific statement of the religious instinct. All behavior is attended by a certain emotional stress; and students of ethics agree that virtue and vice have their peculiar content of feeling. It is hard to see what is gained by giving this emotion another name, especially when the new meaning departs so widely from the accepted connotation of the term. We may admit with Goethe, as quoted by Arnold, that in a certain sense "he who has art and science has also religion;" but the reference here is simply to the intensity of the feeling evoked, not to an appreciation of the ground and goal of spiritual worship. The mistake of the author lies in a careless reading of the facts of psychology. Emotion requires the presence of a specific object as the end of every appetition. In moral conduct, the end is found in the relations of kinship and the wider community, being embodied in the great contributory values of economic support and political control. They do not touch the intangible ends of spiritual culture, although all intrinsic values are necessarily reflected in the common experiences of the race. Arnold is forced to concede the accuracy of our analysis, constructing as he does, in the spirit of Frazer's formula,

⁵ "Literature and Dogma," Ch. 1.

his own description of the Object of devotion: "a power not ourselves which makes for righteousness."⁶

It is futile, however, to identify any object which awakens momentary interest, and perhaps excites a response in moral action, with the universal Object or with religious meditation. The mind's attitude towards the two is essentially different. Arnold mercilessly criticizes the efforts of the Comtian school to confine religion within the concept of an abstract humanity, charging that "men have not yet got to that stage;" they are concerned solely with the affairs of practical duty. If that be true, it is difficult to understand why his formula for Deity is not itself a speculative principle inapplicable to conduct, which, he said, is only three-fourths of life. The point he failed to note was that emotion is inseparably fixed upon an object, either external or internal; hence, either religion must have its exclusive and independent ends, the appreciation of which begets its own form of emotion, or it must be completely swallowed up in morals, surviving only in name. It thus appears that morality cannot create the appetences of religion; that their objects or ends are separate and distinct and should not be confused; that the religious emotion has its own degree of intensities, its own sanctions, which we shall later examine in detail.⁷

(c) The third theory alleges that morals and religion have a coördinate place in the development of the reflective consciousness. Thought, we are advised by experience, develops in triplicate fashion: first, the apprehension of an object in the immediate field of sensation; next, the recognition of the behavior of beings like ourselves and the appearance of the sense of obligation; finally, the generalizing of all responses under the conception of enduring worth which we attribute to certain objects of the imagination. This is certainly the map of individual consciousness; we may confidently apply it to the consciousness of the race.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁷ Mackenzie, "Manual of Ethics," concluding chapter, has some pertinent comments on the subject.

What is the object that possesses enduring worth, acquires a universal quality, and ultimately excites an emotional stress called veneration? May it be an abstract idea, such as omnipotence or goodness or wisdom, which we might, if need be, ascribe as essential attributes to any divinity conceived in the fancy of the mind? Or must it be an existing thing—a universe, a theistic God, an impersonal substance which possesses infinite capacity and eternal duration? These are the only two independent principles upon which divine character could be based and without which Deity cannot be conceived. They are not satisfied by Rome's apotheosis of her imperial leaders. Augustus declined to allow an altar to be erected in his honor, but he did not shrink from placing his *Genius*, the sign of his stimulating spirit, between the *Lares Compitales* at the intersection of important streets. Upon his death, the cult of his divinity was organized, largely for political ends. Veneration thus enforced lacks the stimulus of universality. Each new divinity has his own retinue of worshippers, and religious chaos eventually ensues. Modern cults have achieved no better success; religions founded upon physical health, the relation of the sexes, the extermination of the city slums, the exaltation of an inviting personality (as in Bahaism in Persia), the organization of scientific concepts into a religious system (as in Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe"), carry the seeds of decay within them.

The second factor in the case is the feeling of reverence evoked by the presence of the inspiring object. Madame Guyon testifies that she unconsciously merged the person of her confessor and God into a common substance: "I could not distinguish him from God."^s While allowing for the extravagance of the mystic, we may agree that religion frames a new type of emotional reaction in the practical mind. Reverence assumes that the object of admiration possesses skills and powers and qualities of character beyond the capacity of our own mind to create. We do

^s Quoted by Leuba, "Psychological Study of Religion," p. 36.

“reverence” to such a man as Buddha, who grasps a mighty principle not ordinarily visible to human intelligence, and surrenders his normal expectations in order to make real its aims. Reverence in this sense means respect, a citation of the essential qualities of selfhood. Respect is the index of moral refraction, the medium that determines the angle of moral belief. Transferring our tokens of esteem to the Universal Object, we may say that reverence is man’s attempt to express in language or action the contemplation of his ideal. It therefore requires a definite emotional content which will explain the meaning and worth of the habits associated with the sentiments of religion.

2. The Dogmatic Sanctions of Religion.

Having finished this brief analysis of the religious consciousness, we proceed to show how the concepts of religion take root in the field of social intercourse. The method may be by instruction or by sanction; both of them are important; but we shall lay the emphasis on the second. The concept usually assumes the form of a dogma, which is an opinion accepted by any thinker because it *seems* to him to represent truth. Plato contrasts the word with the decisive terms of knowledge and argues that hearsay or the testimony of authority or a chance experience cannot give exact truth, which is conformity to the laws of rational definition.⁹ Religion reserves to certain groups the right to determine the truth of dogma upon the basis of its own authority. Hence, its concepts do not evince the same definite contours that concepts in science or even in ethics possess. We shall examine two dogmas that enter into the sphere of moral judgment, namely, the will of God as inciting motive and the principle of retribution or reward in a future life.

(a) Is the will of God, as known by intuition or revelation, a valid ground for the pursuit of righteous conduct?

⁹ “Theætetus,” p. 201, *et seq.*

The structures of the historic religions, except in a very few cases like Buddhism, contain this dogma as a cornerstone. Thus, Islam is said to be the "religion of resignation" because it acknowledges the right of Allah to proclaim his will and require unqualified obedience to its commands.¹⁰ In like manner, Christianity begins with the simple petition, "Thy will be done," interpreted boldly and contagiously by the first Petitioner. Submission creates at once an obligation, and obligation is an appeal to the moral nature, the injection of a new and formative motive into the conscious experience of the race. No fair-minded critic will deny the extraordinary effect of this appeal upon the sentiments of the average man. Into the wonder of the savage as well as the trained intelligence of the modern thinker, the imperial behest has sent its responsive thrill of assent. The attempt to be brave, honest, charitable, just, takes on new energy at the urge of the Superlative Will.

But there are stern objections in the path of this surrender. In the first place, it introduces a contradictory element into the determination of moral action. Kant has analyzed the resulting situation with convincing clarity. He argues that conduct is the fruit of a man's individual choice; it is not subject to any sort of dictation, whether by his own organic desires or by an extraneous authority. Action is autonomous; it cannot bow to a principle which conflicts with the judgments of reason. Human feeling, the law of the state, the idea of moral perfection, and, finally, the will of the Deity are all external *motifs*, incentives which, if honored, would defeat the sovereign commands of Self. "The will of God," Kant says, "if agreement with it is taken as the object of the will, without any antecedent practical principle, can be a motive only by reason of the *happiness* expected therefrom."¹¹ He has put his finger on the point at issue. There is just one ground for accepting an external will as our own: we can thereby safeguard our personal welfare both for time and, as in this case, for

¹⁰ Pringle Paterson, "Nature of Religion," p. 238.

¹¹ "Kant's Theory of Ethics," trans. by Abbott, p. 130. See also pp. 51, 59.

eternity. Such a motive he deems to be contrary to the principle of freedom, and hence it must be rejected. Whatever estimate we may place upon his ethical theory as a whole, it is difficult for us to deny the soundness of his argument here. The will of God as expounded in a religious system becomes moral *only when it fits into the scheme of private character and social development*. Then it is not a motive in the technical sense, but a confirmation, from the standpoint of religion, of the harmonious relation between the fundamental motive and its full and coherent consequences.

There is still another objection, this with sinister tone. It states that behind the command embodied in will stands the irresistible sanction, and that refusal to comply with its terms will bring concrete reprisals—disturbed thoughts, thwarted affections, disease of body, and the antagonisms of objective nature. Nothing is easier in the sphere of conjecture than to attribute a violent physical calamity to the moral turpitude of the group affected. The earthquake and fire at San Francisco are chargeable to the political corruptions of the city; the loss of kin and fortune to the concealment of Job's unexpiated sin. Religious thinkers take great liberties with the dogmas of theology as well as with the canons of logic and the facts of science; they erect their superstitions into guiding rules of exposition. The will of God is the broadest canopy under which ignorance and mistaken zeal may find unchallenged shelter. Furthermore, leaders of religion have often deliberately set the command so that the multitude's obedience would react to the leaders' own advantage. In one country, poverty becomes a virtue, and the church reaps a rich harvest; in another, property is the sign of divine approbation, and the church makes sharp distinction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.¹² In general, we may say that the entire system of sanctions is built upon the appeal to fear, which, as everyone admits, is not a *prima facie* motive to moral conduct.

¹² Cf. R. H. Tawney, "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism," p. 149. The book is a significant contribution to the subject.

(b) The second dogma is the principle of requital in another life. The simple question before the student of ethics is this: Can the principle be allowed as a valid sanction in the development of character? We shall answer the question in the negative. Moralists have not always done so. Locke holds that a calculation of the judgments of Eternity constitutes a determining motive in moral action.¹³ Butler avers that the good man who sacrifices his advantages in this present world "has infinitely better provided for himself and secured his own interest and happiness."¹⁴ Rashdall is of the opinion that belief in immortality cannot revolutionize our estimate of moral values, but it "may rationally be held in some cases to alter in appreciable degree our *comparative* estimate of values."¹⁵ The criticism which we shall make turns on the point that it is impossible to determine the value of moral experience by results that belong to an altogether different sphere of operation. Reflective minds deny any necessary connection between an act performed now and its supposed consequences twenty years hence. A whole new set of moral ideas, desires, and emotions have supervened, often changing the basic elements of character. Furthermore, efforts in divergent fields must have compensatory awards compatible with the kind of work performed. It would be indefensible to grant the same emoluments to artist and mechanic; in this judgment Sidgwick is right.¹⁶ It is true that later ages may form opinions of a man's worth contradictory to those passed in his lifetime. This, however, has nothing to do with the sequence of facts constituting moral conduct. We may come nearer to the subject by citing Spencer's attempt to appraise the value of action on the basis of the rules of an absolute Society, a method we have already condemned.¹⁷ The evidence is thus cumulative: Morals are concerned solely with the conditions attending the doing of the deed; the injection

¹³ "Essay on the Human Understanding," Bk. II, Ch. 21. Sec. 70.

¹⁴ "Sermons," III.

¹⁵ "Theory of Good and Evil," Vol. II, p. 265.

¹⁶ "Methods of Ethics," Bk. III. Ch. 5, Sec. 5.

¹⁷ Cf. Pt. II, Ch. 3.

of foreign matters to determine its moral validity renders the whole action void.

But there is another objection that should not be overlooked. It is a matter of record that religious leaders have used the doctrine of future retribution for their own material benefit. They have encouraged the faithful to endure the inequalities of human existence as being divinely ordered, pointing to the hope of a sure rectification in another world. The argument is not merely an insult to the moral intelligence; it is a lying recital of the plain teachings of history. Social injustices are not the necessary impositions of nature; they are frequently the creations of designing men who use the offices of religion to attain their ends. Renan exposes the hypocrisy of the Jewish ecclesiastics in making faith equivalent to social submission. J. S. Mill refers satirically to the work of legislators and moralists who provide "supernatural motives" for the type of conduct they wish to exact from the public.¹⁸ Great chapters of church history are stained by the misuse of the doctrine. It stands to reason that a principle which may be employed with such sinister consequences should either be revised in form or disregarded as a factor in the determination of moral values.

3. The Institutional Sanctions of Religion.

We now turn to religion in its organized form. No religious idea, it is agreed, can survive the enthusiasm of its first utterance except by the establishment of an appropriate *cultus*. In this respect, religion and morals stand on the same foundation; church and state are their respective institutions. An institution requires three distinct properties: a system of rites and ceremonies, an order of officials to perform them, and a body of dogmas to interpret their meaning and fix the scope of their application. We shall attempt briefly to show in what manner the three properties of religion impinge on the moral judgment.

¹⁸ "Three Essays on Religion," p. 121.

It is widely held that religious worship is a private concern; that, while we may follow the ritual of the public service, the main effect lies in calmness of soul and detachment of interest, which bear no relation to the busy activity of a moral career. We may admit that such experiences are essential to the meaning of religion. But worship, as historically practised, proceeds beyond private meditation. It evinces a desire for communication, which we find attested by the accoutrements of a cathedral—its priceless works of art, its music, its liturgies, and the glow of sacred oratory. In fact, every item in the typical cultus includes the principle of social exchange. The observance of certain days, especially a “holy day” once a week, is common to most religions. Skeptical critics, in the spirit of Euhemerus, have explained the utilitarian values of the custom—respite from toil and the development of the community life. Religion has not divorced its sanctities from the practical issues of society; it has been at pains to make real its dogmas in the satisfaction of organic and moral needs. The ultimate worth of a cultus appears, however, in the manner of its execution; that is, in the nature and authority of its sanctions. Thus, respect for holy places, names, and ordinances is categorically exacted from every worshipper. If these are summarily violated by blasphemy, the offender must incur a penalty proportioned to the gravity of the trespass. But what is the definition of the act in question? Objects sacred to one group are profane to another. Unless we can prove that everything in the world possesses religious beauty, and hence *sanctity*, we have no true basis for defining the term. Yet the practical mind is sure that a certain moral damage is done when the name of Deity is handled carelessly, and the religionist assesses the damage by the schedule of his private or sectarian code. As a result, insatiate loyalty has led to revolting excesses. “Fanaticism,” says Bentham in his study of religious sanctions, “fanaticism never sleeps; it is never glutted; it is never stopped by philanthropy, for it makes a merit of trampling on philanthropy; it is never stopped by conscience, for it has pressed conscience into its

service.”¹⁹ History shows how desperately religion may be mutilated by the undue extension of its elementary virtues.

The second property of an institution is the personnel of its official board. In many religious bodies, the clergy possess the exclusive right to conduct the prescribed ceremonies; they are obliged to assume the vows of obedience, and any defection is severely punished. On a lower level, the corporate members of the church must make similar though less rigid engagements; the accompanying sanctions are substantially the same. The hand of ecclesiastical discipline is no longer red with the blood of its victims, but organized religion has not ceased to make its economic threats against measures which interfere with its social advances. Such an attitude has confirmed many reflective persons in the opinion that religious bodies should be sternly rebuked when they venture to dictate the policy of government within what they term the “field of public morals.” Church and state are inevitably separate, at least in the American system, and must remain so. The business of the church as a public body is solely spiritual. Nothing but harm has come from the interference of its officers in the affairs of state. No one will, of course, deny that the Church of the West in Europe (to take a single example) left a salutary imprint on the consciousness of the group. It forced the decadent communities of the Roman Empire to respect the worth of human personality. It fostered the aims of education in the period of confusion following the collapse of imperial power and gave the hand of welcome to the men of the Renaissance. It aided, even if in a halting way, the struggles of the citizens of northern Europe for civil and religious freedom. It took up the burdens of the pioneer, and in distant parts of the world sought to extend the borders of civilization and religion. Morality would in many cases have fought a losing battle but for its aggressive aid. We therefore recognize and applaud the zeal of

¹⁹ “Morals and Legislation,” Ch. 12, Sec. 3, Note.

religion, but insist that not dogma but reasoned thought must determine the duty and purpose of the moral agent.

We need not recite the mistakes and successes in fashioning the confessional standards of the new religion. The attempt to translate the simple precepts of the Founder into elaborate formulas of faith, the assumption that creeds and formulas can take the place of an inner reorganization of desires and impulses, the principle that intellectual apostasy means moral decay and should be sterilized at once by the most drastic measures—misconceptions such as these have stood squarely in the way of moral progress. We may admit that religion rightly requires a careful statement of its intent, since all forms of human action depend upon the *theory* behind the public expression. But we should also recognize that theory must build its terms upon the facts at hand, not upon an imagined system of ideas that never can come under scientific observation. Ideas have force only in so far as they represent the needs of the common mind; theology has lost its sanctions largely because it has carried its credal statement beyond the range of experimental verification. The modern man forges his religion in the fires of critical research; he discards every item that the soundness of moral honesty condemns.

4. The Imaginative Sanctions of Religion.

Hitherto we have dealt with religious sanctions as they are plotted against the background of public judgment; we have detected their deficiencies, due, no doubt, to an inadequate understanding of the rights and duties of personality. But the possibilities of religious experience are not yet exhausted. Is it conceivable that religion may adopt a new type of constraint, a strictly internal motive to shape character and its valid utterances? To be precise, (1) can religion aid us in determining the final meaning of the universal idea, and (2) can it present a figurative realization of ideal character for the moral guidance of the race?

The argument of this book has been that character is the

single goal of endeavor, and that character in so far as it may be called complete is composed of dominant ideas such as justice, honesty, nobility of purpose, and essential love. Each idea is to some extent the universal expression of its corresponding desire directed to an appropriate object. The serious problem before us is to know when the specific principle attains its full significance. Hocking affirms that "universality is a social habit," and he supports his contention by arguing that all truth must be studied as though the "whole conscious universe were looking at it with me."²⁰ His argument is touched with poetic imagination, but does not satisfy a mind seeking to learn what an idea like justice or love means in a man's struggle against his unsubdued impulses. It does not greatly help to be told by Leibniz that we live in a moral world, where events are controlled by the same laws of value as apply to social conduct.²¹ A flood of light is thrown upon the situation by the Scriptures, where the very ideas that thrust their powers into personality are said to rule in movements of Deity. Here we are not tempted to convert moral concepts into scientific laws, as Leibniz does; there is no correspondence between them. Here we strive to find the universal values of the simplest principle that affects behavior. Ethics does not seem able to establish an unembittered union of interests whether of class or nation or the race. Religion in its universal form proceeds on the assumption that the Fatherhood of God requires as its logical correlate the Brotherhood of man. Science in the study of inherent human traits, art in its portrayal of beauty, philosophy in its grasp on fundamentals, have severally attempted to state and externalize the supreme good—but in vain. Justice remains a stranger in the councils of humanity; love is beset by a phalanx of social antipathies. Religion provides the one instrument that can effect the coveted end; it alone can systematize conflicting desires in soul and society. Kant has laid this down as the "regulative principle of reason,"

²⁰ "Meaning of God in Human Experience," Ch. 19,

²¹ "Monadology," Sec. 87.

It yields the "idea of supreme wisdom as our rule in the investigation of nature," which includes our own conduct.²² It thus becomes the explicit guide to moral judgment, and, although men are not compelled to follow the guide, they can no longer complain that the nature of goodness is hidden from their eyes.²³

Once more, the influence of religion is concrete; it does not prove the quality of abstract justice, ideal love, or essential honesty after the manner of Plato's dialectic, but it condenses all qualities into a finished Portrait, such as the imaginative mind is continually striving to create. Walter Pater describes the pure form which the Greek artist endeavored to engrave upon the plastic substance of marble. Form to be *pure* must represent man as he *ought* to be—no excess of color, no exaggeration of line, no unjustified prominence of one feature above another—a constitutive harmony of organs and parts as in a living object. Life itself must exhibit the same sustained order, the mind coördinating the behavior of body and lighting the face with its conscious unity.

Heiterkeit—blitheness or repose—and *Allgemeinheit*—generality or breadth—are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal. . . . Breadth and generality come of a culture, minute, severe, constantly renewed, rectifying and concentrating the impressions into certain pregnant groups.²⁴

But these properties, important as they are, seem to the critic like categorical rules rather than explicit moral virtues. We may award to morality a balance of thought, steadily discriminating choice of desires, and a clear fixation of basic qualities that makes justice always just and benevolence inextinguishably kind. What men seek to evolve is an imitable pattern, a type of moral excellence that can be consciously experienced without losing its universal validity. We demand a composite character which the Greek

²² "Critique of Pure Reason," trans. by Mueller, p. 560.

²³ Inspiring comments from the religious point of view will be found on this general topic in J. A. MacCallum's "The Great Partnership."

²⁴ "Renaissance," 1910 edition, p. 213.

sculptor could not embody in stone, but which, despite his own limitations, the dramatist might perceptibly enshrine in his verse. Drama combines unity of plot with diversity of exposition in the development of the theme. Every character claims his virtues, his idiosyncrasies, his triumphs, as his own, even though they may reduce to a type. Diverse but united, free but fixed in a moral order—this is the delineation of the Hero, who is clothed by religion in the habiliments of perfect manhood. Language touched by faith draws the inimitable picture thus:

Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; . . . rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. . . . And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Here is concentrated Personality of a superlative kind. Balance and universality are its logical laws, Greek tranquillity and Christian fortitude its indispensable moments of character. So subtle is its charm that it is wont to transmute itself at times into a being of flesh and blood, to become, as it were, a figurative vision by our side, such as a Faust plying his doubts upon our sensitive mind, or a Socrates troubling us with his insistent queries, or a Dante refreshing the soul from the cool springs of Paradise, or as the Christ speaking words of hope to conscience and judgment. In the latter case, men do not raise the academic question whether we may legitimately cultivate character by way of emulation, as Aristotle proposed. To copy a model point for point, virtue by virtue, is to surrender reflective choice for mimicking mechanics. The concrete Christ is not to be copied; he is to be revered. Reverence insensibly leads to reflection, and reflection illumines the wide reaches of moral motives, desired ends, and prescribed duties. Hence a stronger sanction than organized religion can impose lies in the completed portrait of devout imagination. Such a sanction has no threat or goad; it calls for self-analysis, for re-adjustment, both of which are the primary demands of

all moral intelligence. In this way, at least, we may attempt to make religion an operative factor in the direction of moral behavior.

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